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NATIONAL REVIEW

LIBERALISM AND TERROR
Conor Cruise O'Brien

Invisible Men: The GOP's Black Voters

Alien Corn: Peter Brimelow Answers His Critics

Wage Gap Claptrap Zapped

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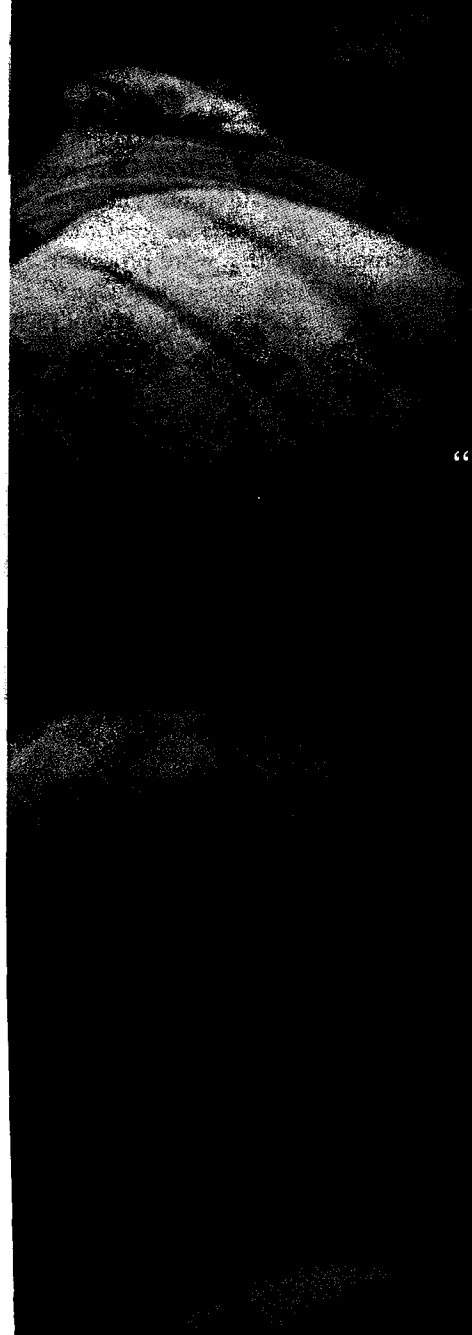
"Sarah's leukemia was frightening enough. Then an infection set in that nearly killed all hope."

MICHAEL DEUTSCH, SARAH'S FATHER
BURLINGTON, WISCONSIN



Battling leukemia when you're only six is difficult. Being besieged by a life-threatening infection on top of it is devastating.

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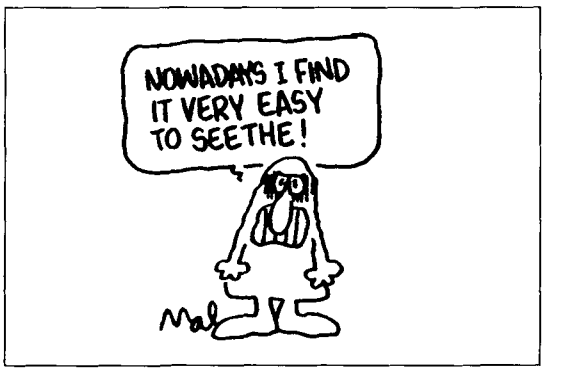


COVER STORY

29 ***Liberalism and Terror***
In theory, liberalism can cope with terrorism, but **Conor Cruise O'Brien** explains that, in practice, liberal instincts get in the way.

ARTICLES

21 ***Capital Scene***
Voting Republican isn't as simple as black and white, writes **Ramesh Ponnuru**. . . . **David Frum** thinks that Pat Buchanan's nationalist issues could be electoral hits—properly understood. . . . **Kate O'Beirne** describes how the Senate sank a Navy flier.

26 ***On the Scene***
Israeli anti-terrorist efforts are being undermined from within, reports **Rael Jean Isaac,** by the liberal impulses described by Dr. O'Brien.

34 ***Wage Wars***
Uncovering the marriage between liberal agendas and Congressional Budget Office chicanery clears up the mysterious cases of the wage and wealth gaps, argue **John H. Hinderaker** and **Scott W. Johnson**.

38 ***Pitching Socialism***
Bureaucratic plans to make money with sports stadiums invariably end up out in left field, explains **Raymond J. Keating**. . . . **Chris Weinkopf** says Magic Johnson's playmates have learned their lesson well: Say the right thing.

43 ***Alien Nation: Round 2***
Peter Brimelow lists the jibes, jeers, flouts, and sneers directed at his immigration book—and gives better than he got.

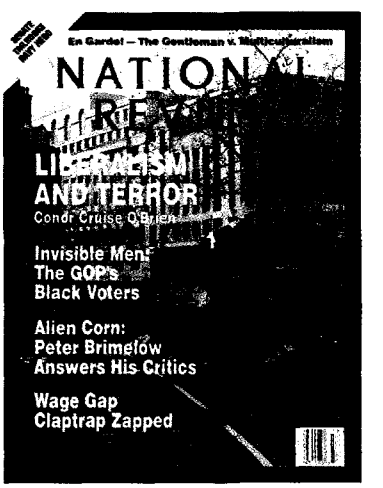
BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

52 Can an American be a gentleman? If a civilization is defined by its ideal code of conduct, **Jeffrey Hart** has an answer. . . . **Forrest McDonald** reads Theodore Draper's *A Struggle for Power: The American Revolution*, and finds a historian struggling with a word processor. . . . In *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, Carl Sagan sets science against baloney. But only other people's baloney, says **Phillip E. Johnson**. . . . **Maggie Gallagher** discovers a peculiarly American fairy tale with a Nineties twist in Carol Buckley's memoir, *At the Still Point*. . . . Get rid of your cookbooks, says *NR*'s Digby Anderson. No, keep them, says **Linda Bridges**, and get more. Here's where to start. . . . Forgo *Fargo*, recommends **John Simon**, and *Jack and Sarah* too.

68 ***The Gimlet Eye***
Joe Bob Briggs wonders why Moms are running the world.

SECTIONS

4 ***Letters***
6 ***From the Editor***
9 ***For the Record***
10 ***The Week***
28 ***Gekko***
48 ***Letter from Al***
50 hel
62 ***Books in Brief***
65 ***Trans-O-Gram***
66 ***On the Right***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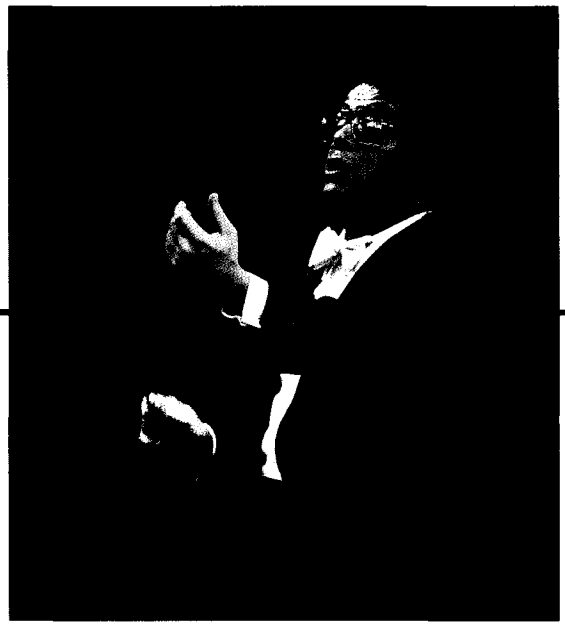

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LETTERS

Dole? Forget It

"Mr. Dole's Inheritance" ["The Week," March 25] is full of hopeful formulae for Bob Dole to win the election. Psst, guys—it's over. A re-elected Clinton will lurch left on November 6. And if you think you've seen an extremist the first time round, you'd better hunker down.

Millions of conservatives, like me, will sit on their hands or vote for the Libertarian—or even Clinton. Do you really expect us to support the man who torpedoed the Contract with America and the Kemp Tax Report?

Dole has no principles except faith in the Nanny State. He can't string two sentences together unless some spinmeister writes them for him. Clinton will clean his clock unless one of Clinton's time bombs explodes—Bosnia, Ireland, China, Whitewater. Winning at the cost of lives and honor would be an awful way to win.

NR should devote itself to holding onto Congress—not because the Republicans deserve it, but because conservatives will need it. Indeed, a vote for Clinton is a strategic vote. Four more years of him will guarantee *another* Republican revolution. The Republicans will then have another chance to shoot themselves in the feet—the only thing they consistently do well.

Churchill's words are apposite: "So they go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift . . . So here we go preparing more months and years . . . for the locusts to eat."

Richard M. Langworth
Hopkinton, N.H.

Immigration Dystopia

"America or Utopia?" ["The Week," March 25] and Roy Beck's "Republicans against Reform" [April 8] leave your readers with the distinct impression that I oppose immigration reform. Not so. I support reforms that focus on the real problem of illegal immigration without punishing employers and immigrants who play by the rules. In the Senate Judiciary Committee, I added provisions to Sen. Alan Simpson's illegal-immigration bill to beef up border patrol, penalize visa-overstayers, provide for swifter deportation of criminal aliens, and deny public assistance to illegal aliens and further restrict it for legal ones.

The Committee also adopted two of my legal-immigration-reform amendments to the Simpson bill. One re-orders the family-priority system and freezes new applications for siblings, thus reducing immigration by 15 per cent in the family and diversity categories. The other amendment would increase protection for American workers through a layoff-attestation requirement for all businesses seeking to hire foreign temporary workers. I support legal-immigration reform—just not the kind advocated by Mr. Beck and his colleagues in the population-control movement.

Both pieces refer to a Bureau of Labor Statistics study showing that immigrants are responsible for "roughly half the decline in the real wages" of high-school dropouts. But as the *Wall Street Journal* recently reported, there is no official BLS study on this subject, rather a "working paper," distributed by someone a BLS spokesman has described as a "graduate student." Other studies, such as one by Princeton's David Card, show little wage impact from immigration.

Using Census data spanning 15 years, *NR* contributing editor Stephen Moore found that cities with the highest proportion of immigrants in 1990 had 15 per cent *higher* per-capita incomes, 130 per cent *higher* job growth, 17 per cent *lower* crime rates, and 17 per cent *lower* poverty rates than cities with few immigrants.

"America or Utopia?" argues that skilled immigrants add little to American entrepreneurship and are hired merely because they are cheaper than their native-born counterparts. The facts show the opposite. The Cato Institute's Stuart Anderson cites data from the National Academy of Sciences and National Science Foundation showing that immigrants with advanced degrees in science and engineering earn significantly more than their native-born counterparts.

Both pieces urge Republicans to follow the polls. But principles are more important than polls, and such principles include that Americans be allowed to sponsor close family members and U.S. companies to hire the employees of their choice. Sen. Simpson is right to take on Social Security despite the polls. Polls are the last bastion of those with weak arguments.

Spencer Abraham
Washington, D.C.

Please see the editorial on this subject in this issue's "The Week." —ED.

Defending the Dollar

NR ["The Week," March 25] states that a return to the gold standard, "of course, would mean periodically closing down the economy to reduce imports and generate a dollar-bolstering current-account surplus . . ." It would, of course, mean nothing of the kind.

Such an "adjustment crisis" can only be triggered if the foreigners who hold the U.S. securities that finance the current account lose confidence in the currency, driving down the value of dollar-denominated assets and pushing up domestic interest rates. Of course, the risk of such an eventuality declines precipitously when the currency is immutably guaranteed as a fixed measure of value, such as gold. A return to gold would make the dollar immune to the whims of politicians and mercantilist interests (and, it now appears, *NR*) seeking illusory trade advantage through debasement of the unit of account. Lest we forget, Nixon was advised to close the gold window in 1971 (by, among others, dollar-basher extraordinaire Fred Bergsten) for the express purpose of using devaluation to improve the terms of trade. Alas, the price for this little experiment in economic engineering was the greatest episode of American inflation since the Civil War—with continued deterioration of the U.S. trade position.

To be perfectly frank, it feels more than a little odd, and sad, to have to defend the virtues of a strong and stable dollar against criticism from NATIONAL REVIEW.

David Gitlitz
Polyconomics, Inc.
Morristown, N.J.

We are frankly baffled by Mr. Gitlitz's assertion that foreigners' loss of confidence is the only possible cause of a dollar decline. What about shifts in the terms of trade? What about the Federal Reserve's over-expanding of the money supply (which, contrary to Mr. Gitlitz, is what actually led to the Great Inflation of the Seventies)? Moreover, Mr. Gitlitz's implication that a return to the gold standard would be pain-free contradicts the argument of most of its advocates that its advantage is precisely the fiscal discipline that it imposes on policymakers. We believe that the dollar exchange rate is not a totem, but a price like any other. And prices are best set by markets. —ED.

Rising to the Occasion

Peter J. Ferrara ["Choctaw Uprising," March 11] describes what free-market dreams are made of. The entrepreneurial Choctaw are a model to all tribes—Indian, African, or Anglo-Saxon.

Geoff Chudleigh
Austin, Tex.

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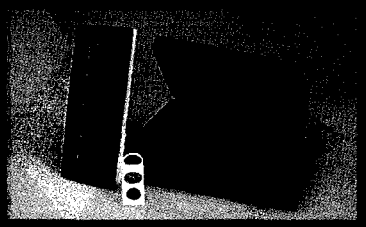

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FROM THE EDITOR

Where's the Beef?

■ When news reports suggest that horrific events are taking place in Britain, I usually find that a telephone call to my mother cuts them down to size.

Television reports about the 1981 Liverpool riots (which were taking place in a downtown district called Toxteth) worried me but I found her unperturbed.

"They're always rioting around there," she explained—a shrewd observation not made by any of the highly paid commentators.

The reports of "mad cow" disease last week saw me telephoning again. Was she eating beef?

"Unfortunately not," she replied. "The radio reported that Sainsburys (a British grocery chain) had cut their best beef prices by half. But by the time I got there, they had sold out. I was really irritated."

She had in fact demonstrated a good grasp of scientific logic. No scientific link between BSE (which maddens cows) and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease which attacks humans has been established. There is a circumstantial link, based on ten cases in Scotland of a new strain of CJD, which consists essentially in there being no other obvious cause.

But the cattle that might have been infected have already been removed from the food chain. And even if the experts' most hypothetical fears turn out to be right, millions of people have already been infected because they ate contaminated beef years ago. They won't get sicker by eating wholesome beef today.

Why the hysteria in political and media elites? It fits a familiar pattern. We have had elite panics over natural resource exhaustion, alar, DDT, and global warming.

A public-choice theorist would note that these scares extended government power—and so the power of experts. But that does not explain the hysteria gripping the eminent.

Our elites are increasingly shielded from reality. This makes them unprepared for unpleasantness and so vulnerable to myths, panics, and magical thinking when unpleasantness occurs. Unlike more down-to-earth citizens like, well, like my mother.

■ Three new biblical figures have entered my life in recent days—thanks to the updated New American Bible used in Catholic churches. For instance, one "John the Baptizer."

I imagine that this is the prophet known worldwide and for centuries as John the Baptist. Surely little is gained by the change, except possibly the clarification that John is not a Southern Baptist.

This week I made the acquaintance of the "two insurgents" crucified alongside Christ. It might please their mothers to know they have come up in the world from thievery and were arrested for shouting "Palestine for the Palestinians." To judge from his fine article on page 29, however, Conor Cruise O'Brien would not rank even the Good Insurgent higher on the moral scale than an ordinary decent criminal.

Such translations evoke secular political distractions when we should be thinking about higher things.

And they do so without the powerful popular poetry of the King James version. Again from Sunday's Gospel, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" becomes "the spirit is willing, but nature is weak."

This takes a phrase, that has enriched colloquial English and reminds us that we are a Bible-soaked civilization, and turns it into a flat statement with overtones of environmentalism and the biology lesson.

Poetry and metaphor are foreign to modern biblical translations. Yet it is poetry and metaphor which will give us, if anything will, some elusive intimation of religious truths beyond our common understanding.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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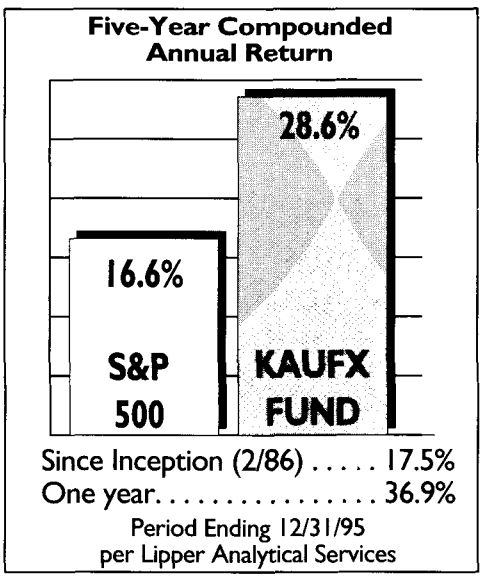

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FOR THE RECORD

■ **Ross Perot**'s announcement that he will run for President if members of his Reform Party nominate him has Republicans worried he will again spoil their chances of beating **Bill Clinton**. But is Perot such a boon to the Democrats? Three out of five voters supporting Perot now did not back him in 1992, according to columnist **Mark Shields**, and he appears to be taking these backers from Clinton. Among Perot's new supporters, Clinton is second choice over **Bob Dole** by a margin of 6 to 1. . . . American University's **Allen Lichtman** notes, "Since 1940, nine third-party candidates have received more than 5 per cent of the vote, and the incumbent lost in eight of those cases." Clinton strategist **James Carville** agrees: "Perot is going to spend a lot of time and a lot of his gazillions of dollars ragging on the President. I don't know why the Republicans are doing so much whining." . . . Perot made angry call to CNN after **Bill Kristol** characterized him on *Inside Politics* as "not an entirely sane individual." . . . **Pat Buchanan** inches away from an independent bid of his own: "There's a very powerful persuasive argument to stay in [the GOP]. If Sen. Dole is nominated and loses, by the year 2000, [he] will have departed from the scene politically, Bill Clinton will have departed from the scene politically, and my guess is Ross Perot will have departed politically. Who will then have the strongest base?" . . . **Ralph Nader** vows to run for President as candidate of Green Party, professing unconcern about potentially costing Clinton the election: "If that happens to Clinton because he refuses to adopt a very important campaign-finance reform . . . he deserves it." Meanwhile, Nader takes credit for Buchanan's economics: "We have educated Buchanan on NAFTA and these economic issues. We gave Buchanan huge amounts of information that he began to absorb."

■ Some Dole advisors are still talking about a **Colin Powell** vice-presidential nomination as way to appeal to disaffected center. "It's the best way to mute the Perot factor," says Dole national co-chairman **Vin Weber**. . . . *USA Today* columnist **Michael Gartner** re the appeal of Powell: "You've got to feel sorry for Bob Dole. Millions apparently want to see him get elected—and then die." . . . House Majority Leader **Dick Armey** and Senate Majority Whip **Trent Lott** soon to take over as effective leaders of their chambers, as Speaker **Newt Gingrich** concentrates on the big picture and Dole runs for President. Armey tells *The Hill* newspaper, "If you take the four of us, Newt and Sen. Dole are fairly close, in the same place on the political spectrum. And Sen. Lott and I are two ticks to the right." . . . *Wall Street Journal* reports several House freshmen will meet with Dole to push classmates **Sue Myrick** (N.C.), **David McIntosh** (Ind.), and **Steve Largent** (Okla.) as running-mates. **J. C. Watts** (Okla.) also being mentioned. . . . Massachusetts Gov. **Bill Weld** says the issues he will use when he runs against **John Kerry** in November Senate race are "Crime, welfare, and taxes, and then taxes, some welfare, and then some crime." . . . **Rush Limbaugh** makes qualified defense of fellow radio personality **Don Imus**'s performance at annual Radio and TV Correspondents' dinner: "The only thing Imus lies about is me." Democratic TV host **Chris Matthews** takes Clinton to task for sitting through speech: "I would have been proud if he had left. I think it was a defining moment." Republican TV host **Mary Matalin** disagrees: "The Democrats have proved they are humor impaired."

"Don't look now, but we're being followed by the Ethics Committee."

■ Leak of a plan for Jerusalem's partition authorized by Labor Prime Minister **Shimon Peres**'s foreign ministry could tip scales in favor of a newly reunited conservative movement under **Benjamin Netanyahu** in May elections. . . . U.S. commander in Korea, Gen. **Gary Luck**, told Congress, "We worry that this country [North Korea] will either collapse or take aggressive actions against the South." . . . Western Cape Premier **Hernus Kriel**, a white Afrikaner launching political campaign against Pres. **Nelson Mandela**'s African National Congress, charges Mandela has acquired $10.5 million since he got out of prison in 1990, more, according to Kriel, than mining magnate **Harry Oppenheimer** in same period. . . . U.S. special envoy **Robert Einhorn** returned empty-handed from Peking; he was asking for guarantees China would not ship more nuclear-weapons equipment to Pakistan. U.S. law would thus require a cutoff of $10 billion in export financing, but Commerce Sec. **Ron Brown** tells business luncheon Administration will go for extending Most Favored Nation status when it expires in June. . . . China's hand-picked Preparatory Committee for the Takeover of Hong Kong—wealthy businessmen and Chinese civil servants—voted 149 to 1 to abolish the Colony's Legislative Council upon China's takeover.

■ National Journalism Center, which offers media training in a context of traditional values, is accepting applications for 12-week summer session. Session starts June 10; deadline for applications is May 17. Contact **M. Stanton Evans** or **Mal Kline** at 800 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; phone 202-544-1333, fax 202-544-5368. . . . Leadership Institute, based in Springfield, Virginia, publishes exhaustive study of giving by business and association PACs. Available free; call 703-321-8580. . . . **Lee Edwards**, author of recent biography of **Barry Goldwater**, has been named Visiting Fellow at Heritage Foundation; he will write definitive history of the think tank for its 25th anniversary in 1998.

■ Taco Bell runs April Fools' Day ad in *Washington Post* announcing its purchase of Liberty Bell to help reduce national debt. Historic treasure will be renamed "Taco Liberty Bell."

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THE WEEK

■ Britain desperately seeks the cause of the "mad cow" disease that may require the destruction of millions of its cattle. The first thing to investigate is whether Hillary took a short position.

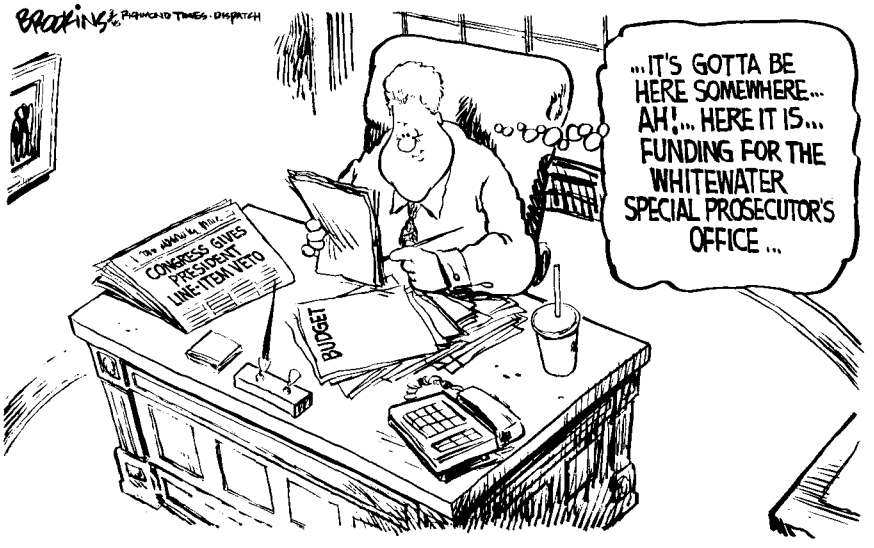
■ Who says Ross Perot is unpredictable? As soon as Bob Dole wrapped up the nomination and the press needed something to write about, the Texan stepped into the vacuum with media-teasing talk of running for President again (but only, of course, if his supporters and hired political operatives around the country *draft* him). Perot represents the rot of American politics, a populism that is off the point (avoiding the gut-level issues that bother Americans), mindless (refusing to distinguish between the GOP Congress and President Clinton), and destructive (seeking, ultimately, to encourage cynicism among the voting public). After bringing the balanced budget to the fore in 1992, Perot stood idly by as Republicans banged their heads against a wall trying to enact one. Now, naturally, he attacks them for failing. The focus of Perot's 1996 campaign will be campaign-finance reform. So, naturally, he will spend $60 million of his own cash denouncing the role of money in politics. Enough people seem to be onto this act that Perot will be relegated this time around to single digits (where his support will be drawn in unpredictable proportions from Dole and Clinton). Then, this particular crazy aunt will finally be put back into the basement.

■ On March 28, the Senate Judiciary Committee adopted an amendment to the immigration-reform bill introduced by Alan Simpson (R., Wyo.) to increase—yes, *increase*—legal immigration by more than 100,000. The amendment's supporters, including Edward Kennedy (D., Mass.), Spencer Abraham (R., Mich.), Paul Simon (D., Ill.), and Mike DeWine (R., Ohio), manipulated statistics to present their plan as a moderate *reduction* in family-preference and "diversity" immigration. But Rosemary Jenks of the Center for Immigration Studies points out that while the original Simpson bill would have cut total legal immigration to an estimated 600,000 a year during the first five years, and to just over 450,000 thereafter, the Kennedy–Abraham amendment would push legal immigration to more than 830,000 while reducing the share of visas for skilled workers from 20 per cent under the original bill to a maximum of 15.6 per cent. (Unused visas for skilled workers would be allocated to family-based immigrants, although the immigrationists tell us that there is a *shortage* of skill-based immigrants.) Kennedy, Abraham, Simon, DeWine, Orrin Hatch (R., Utah), Patrick Leahy (D., Vt.), Dianne Feinstein (D., Calif.), and Russ Feingold (D., Wis.) voted for the amendment; Simpson, Strom Thurmond (R., S.C.), Hank Brown (R., Colo.), and Jon Kyl (R., Ariz.) voted nay. That makes the breakdown: Republicans, opposed; Democrats and Mugwumps, in favor.

■ With Ralph Nader on the ballot in California, Bill Clinton becomes the first airbag Nader has ever opposed.

■ In 1998, get ready for Tom Campbell, Republican senatorial nominee from California. At least that's what the moderate congressman was thinking when he hatched the idea of switching California's primaries from "closed" to "open." Translation: Instead of only Republicans being permitted to vote for their party's nominee, Democrats can vote in the GOP primary too (and vice versa). The intention is to make it easier for moderates like Campbell—who narrowly lost to conservative Bruce Herschensohn in a 1992 primary—to draw the votes of Democrats and dilute the strength of conservatives. Bankrolled by the late David Packard, a Campbell backer, a ballot measure to open the primaries, effective in 1998, passed easily in late March. Both parties opposed it. But the battle was lost early on when ballot language was approved describing Proposition 198 in such goo-goo terms that voting against it seemed like opposing democracy itself. Now the parties have to figure out another way—perhaps a law suit or a counter-initiative—to preserve the integrity of their primaries. As for Campbell, there's nothing about his eager desire to win Democratic primary votes that a simple switch in registration wouldn't satisfy.

■ The Freemen, currently holed up near tiny Jordan, Montana, ran an elaborate check-fraud and counterfeiting operation that since late 1994 bilked businesses and the government of around $1.8 million. They held seminars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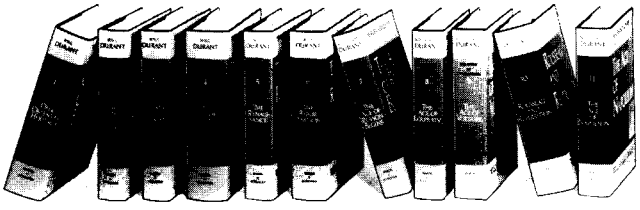

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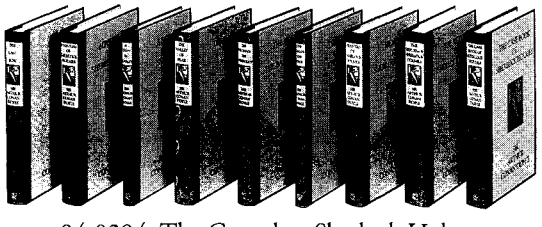

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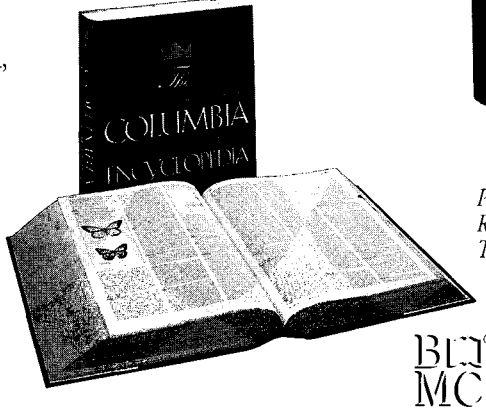

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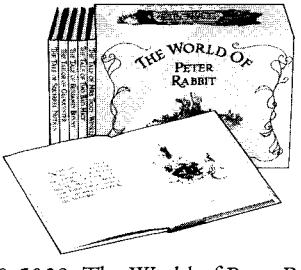

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on tax evasion and check fraud for other free spirits from across the nation. They set bounties on local officials and threatened their lives. And they did it all undisturbed by federal law enforcement. The Freemen are the Loony Right's answer to Rodney King. America's most famous drunk driver, you'll remember, has a free pass for life from an LAPD not eager to tangle with him again. The Freemen almost got similar treatment from the FBI and its director, Louis Freeh, rightly chastened by Waco and Ruby Ridge. Members of the Freemen had been indicted by a federal grand jury for offenses related to their creative financing back in May 1995. But the FBI didn't dare arrest them. It took the local county attorney begging for action, and a local farmer rounding up a 25-man posse to storm the group's stronghold, before the feds acted. Now that there is a siege on, the FBI is wise to heed the lessons of the past and take it slow. But a lesson can be learned too well. Mr. Freeh, it's OK to arrest nuts when they also happen to be crooks.

■ "Dole Has Doubts on Clinton's Character" (newspaper headline). Always the quick study.

■ We're all free-traders now. Right? Wrong. Case in point, the latest G-7 conference on employment. Further liberalization of world trade, said Jacques Chirac, requires "a few basic rules" to be applied universally "so as to guarantee the dignity of the working man, wherever in the world he may be." Translation: The onerous employment restrictions that make it nearly impossible to downsize in Europe, along with European-style entitlements (and their corollary—high rates of unemployment and taxation), must be adopted in the U.S. and Japan. Chirac avers that different wage and employment laws would be "less and less tolerated" as international competition grows. We agree: left to itself, free trade will invariably shrink government in countries that have too much of it. But Robert Reich is supporting Chirac, and the International Labor Organization in demanding uniformity—at Europe's levels. Perhaps someone should teach the Labor Secretary some French, as in, *Vive la différence.*

Go, Ralph, Go!

Ralph Nader, safe at any speed
That throws the Mrs. off her feed,
Will run in California, an
Event that Bill would love to ban.
So costume Ralph as Birnam Wood:
A 6 per cent performance could
Make hubby feel his own damn pain
Holed up in drafty Dunsinane.

—W. H. von Dreele

■ A cohort of GOP leaders, from Dole and Gingrich on down, appeared at a March 21 news conference to announce the Defend America Act of 1996. Its aim is to require the deployment by 2003 of an anti-missile defense for the United States. President Clinton, in thrall to outmoded strategic doctrines, vetoed a similar provision in the 1996 defense-authorization bill and has slowed down procurement of theater missile defenses as well. But the congressional leaders rightly cited the emerging missile threat not only from rogue states like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, but also from China: Gingrich quoted a Chinese official who recently boasted to a visiting American that Taiwan was vulnerable because the U.S. would never risk Los Angeles. Protecting this country and its forces and friends abroad is an obvious strategic priority—a political priority, if the Democrats shirk it.

■ American scientist-astronaut Shannon Lucid was welcomed for a prolonged stay aboard the Russian space station Mir. "We know that women just love to clean," beamed the Russian general in charge.

■ Author and feminist grump Shere Hite advises that she has had it with the United States and wants to move to Germany. Why not Russia, sweetie? They always need cleaning persons.

■ The National Association of Scholars has just issued a study called "The Dissolution of General Education, 1914–1993," documenting the precipitous drop in mandatory coursework in American universities and colleges, particularly since the 1960s. This amounts to the loss of a common core of knowledge once deemed essential to a liberal education; college students can now remain intellectual freshmen for four years. In 1914, 98 per cent of elite schools required English composition; by 1993, the figure had dropped to 36 per cent, making way for the advent of remedial English comp, which is often merely a diet of "free writing" exercises. Courses in foreign languages were required by 90 per cent of top schools in 1964, by 66 per cent in 1993; courses in history, by 38 per cent in 1964, 12 per cent in 1993. The proportion requiring literature courses dropped from 57 per cent in 1914 to 14 per cent in 1993, mathematics courses, from 82 to 12 per cent. The study concludes that the well-structured general education has "largely vanished," causing "a purging from the curriculum of many of the required basic survey courses that used to familiarize students with the historical, cultural, political, and scientific foundations of their society." In this light, multiculturalism begins to make sense: it gives students the soothing feeling that what they don't know isn't worth knowing.

■ This week's new disease is hyperlexia. It means taking, quote, an "unusual" interest in letters and numbers, and learning to read and spell, quote, "too soon." In other words, being a bright kid. This "affliction" has all the earmarks of being invented by public-school psychologists.

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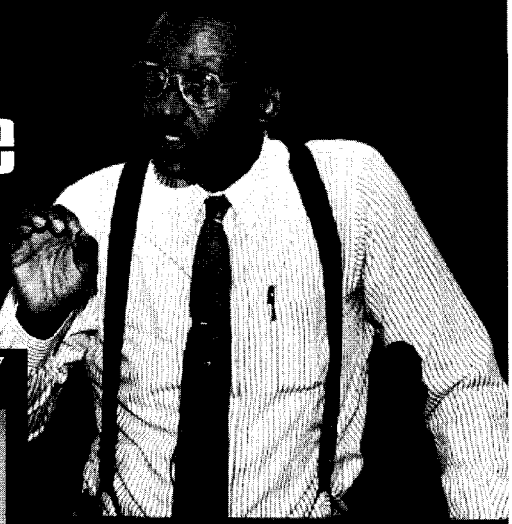

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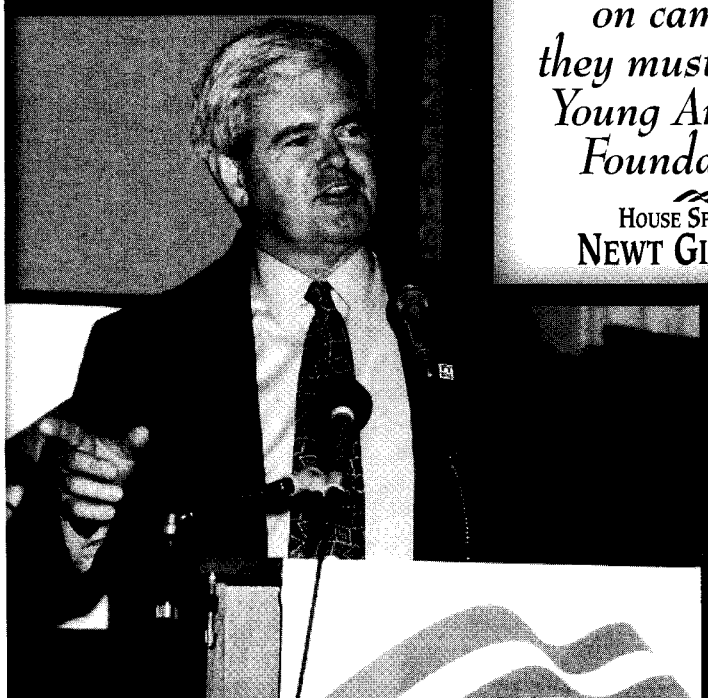

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Children who can read must be a nightmare in a lot of public schools. They make it difficult to dumb down the rest of the class at an orderly pace, and they're much smarter than the average member of the teachers' unions.

■ Columnist Tony Snow records that Mrs. Clinton rolled up fully 50 "I don't recall"s and "I don't believe"s in 42 paragraphs of testimony before the Travelgate grand jury. Fifty more reasons for Mr. Clinton to punch a columnist.

■ Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz of Lincoln, Nebraska, has put his flock on notice that they must choose between being Catholics in good standing and belonging to organizations that oppose Church teachings. The proscribed organizations include Planned Parenthood and the Hemlock Society, as might be expected, but also super-traditionalist groups that reject the Second Vatican Council as heretical. The media blazoned, "Bishop Threatens to Excommunicate Dissenting Catholics." Another way of putting it is that Bishop Bruskewitz is doing his pastoral duty in alerting people to the fact that they have removed themselves from communion. He apparently believes that he who affirms A on Sunday cannot affirm not-A on Monday. Public, persistent, and knowing agitation against the teaching of the Church is not compatible with membership in it. That's not so difficult to grasp. While canon lawyers reportedly mull the legal niceties of the bishop's action, we believe that he has made a very good start that other church leaders (and not only Roman Catholic) might think about emulating.

■ On April 8, 1966, *Time* famously asked, "Is God Dead?" This Easter, its cover story ("The Search for Jesus") touts the Gospel-debunking Jesus Seminar, whose members do what most Biblical "higher critics" do: assume that God hasn't revealed Himself in Scripture, and go on from there. For thirty years *Time* has been waiting for that assumption to take hold among the public at large, but the public isn't buying it. Nor, increasingly, are they buying *Time*. Suggested cover story for next Easter: "Is *Time* Dead? The Search for Subscribers."

At the Cauldron

As Serbs contribute hair of newt
And Muslims, eye of toad,
While Croats stir in furry things
To make it à la mode,
The President observes the brew
With obvious distaste,
But that's the icky dish one gets
When ordering in haste.

—W. H. VON DREELE

■ Any kid can figure out how to get on the Internet, but the IRS, after spending $4 billion to modernize its 1960s-era computers, still has to truck taxpayers' records from one office to another on magnetic tapes. The Treasury Department acknowledges that the IRS modernization is "badly off track," but has not called off plans to spend over $16 billion more. Still, if that's all it costs to keep the IRS primitive, it's a bargain.

Immigration Pause

SINCE the 1994 passage of California's Proposition 187, virtually all policymakers, Republican and Democratic, have agreed with the American people that the United States should take strong measures to control illegal immigration. But when it comes to reforming legal immigration, there is an inverse relationship between what ordinary Americans and policymakers want. And both the House of Representatives and the Senate Judiciary Committee demonstrated their indifference to popular anxieties by rejecting the legal-immigration reform proposals introduced by Rep. Lamar Smith (R., Tex.) and Sen. Alan Simpson (R., Wyo.).

In fact, the House and the Senate seem to be playing a perverse game of one-upmanship. In mid March the Senate Judiciary Committee approved an amendment to the Simpson bill from Sen. Spencer Abraham (R., Mich.) splitting consideration of legal and illegal immigration. The following week, Reps. Dick Chrysler (R., Mich.), Howard Berman (D., Calif.), and Sam Brownback (R., Kan.) introduced an amendment eliminating reductions in legal immigration from the Smith bill (under the guise of "splitting" the bill). Then, one week later, Sens. Ted Kennedy (D., Mass.), Abraham, Paul Simon (D., Ill.), and Mike DeWine (R., Ohio) proposed an amendment that replaced Sen. Simpson's cuts in legal immigration with an *increase* (see p. 10 of this issue). Which is where matters now stand.

Some conservative friends like Sen. Abraham and Rep. Dick Armey were on the wrong side of these votes. In his letter on page 4 of this issue, the senator protests that he is nonetheless a reformer—and indeed he did propose some useful, if uncontroversial, measures to speed up the deportation of criminal aliens. On the main question, however, he sponsored the amendment that everyone else knew would kill legal-immigration reform. And he did so even after the provisions affecting skilled immigration (ostensibly the cause of his objection) had been dropped. He is sadly misinformed, moreover, if he thinks the technical literature shows "little wage impact" from immigration. These effects began to be reported several years ago, as the post–1965 Immigration Act influx started driving the data. Indeed, they appear in Professor Card's later work. This phenomenon was discussed in George Borjas's *Journal of Economic Literature* survey of the field in December 1994, and for that matter in *NR* senior editor

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Peter Brimelow's book *Alien Nation* last year. Dr. David Jaeger's results are simply the most dramatic evidence yet. (Dr. Jaeger is not a "graduate student," by the way, but a full-time economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics—and his work has been awarded the *Upton Employment Institute Dissertation Award*.)

Now that reform of legal immigration has been gutted, however, what is left? The remnants of the Smith and Simpson bills significantly improve illegal-immigration control. Both would enhance border and workplace enforcement, speed up the deportation process, and reduce welfare use by immigrants. Both deserve public support. But they don't go far enough. In particular, they allow legal immigration to continue at rates that are both historically high and roughly three times the level favored by 70 per cent of ordinary Americans.

And ordinary Americans are right. Economically and socially, there is little to choose between legal and illegal immigration. Legal immigrants today, like illegals, are largely unskilled and poorly educated (only 10 to 15 per cent are admitted because they have needed skills); they are highly concentrated in low-wage industries, and thus pay low income taxes; and they are more likely than natives (or illegals, who are ineligible) to receive welfare benefits. Finally, of course, there are many more legal immigrants than illegal ones. Of the 1.1 million or so immigrants who enter the U.S. annually, almost three-quarters are legal. Smith and Simpson clearly recognized that, by failing to reduce legal immigration, Congress would be addressing only a quarter of the problem.

Their approach was opposed from the outset by the usual pro-immigration liberals, allied with ethnic lobbyists. To defeat reform, this group joined forces with a conservative minority made up of big-business supporters

Right Data

REMEMBER the middle-class tax cut? Candidate Clinton promised a big one, to be paid for by soaking the rich. Only the income distribution didn't cooperate. IRS data for 1993 (the latest available) show only 65,646 taxpayers with adjusted gross incomes of $1 million or more. These lucky people accounted for 0.06 per cent of all taxpayers, yet they paid nearly 10 per cent of all income taxes, or more than 1,600 times their unadjusted share. Slap a 50 per cent surtax on their income-tax bills and, at best, you'd squeeze out another $26 billion, enough to run the Federal Government for only 6 days. Undaunted, Clinton's tax department defined "rich" downward, to incomes of $200,000 and over. Still no luck. Only 979,000 tax returns—less than 1 per cent of the total—fell into that category in 1993. A 50 per cent surtax on everyone in this group would keep the government running for 16 days.

The 1993 Tax Act contained the largest tax increase in history—$241 billion over five years. That kind of money can't be raised without putting the touch on Middle America.

Federal tax rates on a typical median-income family (one breadwinner, four people) have traced a U-shaped curve since 1989. When real incomes plummeted early in the decade, federal tax rates followed suit, falling from 19.3 per cent in 1989 to 18.4 per cent in 1993. The lower tax rates cushioned the recession's blow. Since 1993, however, while middle-class incomes have stagnated, Clinton's tax rates haven't. Clintonomics, along with stubbornly high state and local levies, has reduced real after-tax income throughout the recovery.

(Middle)-Class Warfare
(One-Earner Family; 1995 Dollars)

	Median Family Income		Taxes as a % of Income	
	Before Tax	After Tax	Federal	State & Local
1985	$30,013	$20,733	19.0%	11.9%
1989	31,004	21,331	19.3	11.9
1993	27,625	19,111	18.4	12.4
1994	27,754	19,087	18.8	12.4
1995E	27,788	19,055	18.9	12.5

Source: Tax Foundation. Calculations by author.

But something isn't right. This family's income—$27,788 in 1995—is too low for it to be deemed rich, even by the Clinton White House. Why does it face higher tax rates? One reason, often overlooked, is the sharp increase in gasoline taxes. Clinton's tax hike jacked up federal gasoline-tax rates a whopping 50 per cent, to 18.4 cents per gallon. This tax is paid both at the pump and indirectly, in the cost of transported goods. Relative to income, middle-class families pay nearly three times more gas tax than upper-income families.

The middle-income elderly also face higher rates today than when Bill Clinton took office. That's because 85 per cent of Social Security benefits are now subject to income tax. Unmarried seniors earning as little as $34,000 (including their benefits), and married couples with incomes of $44,000, pay tax on part of their benefits.

The largest revenue-raiser was the increase in the top marginal tax rate, made retroactive to January 1, 1993. Supposedly, only the "rich" were affected. But singles with taxable income of over $115,000, and married couples making over $140,000, saw their marginal rates jump 5 points, to 36 per cent. Many tax returns with incomes in this range are, in fact, those of small businesses employing unskilled, low-income workers. The tax burden falls on the employees as well as their employers.

The bottom line? Our median one-earner family paid 31.4 per cent of its income to federal, state, and local governments last year. That's the highest tax percentage since 1975, according to the Tax Foundation. This family's tax bill exceeds its expenditure on medical care, food, and clothing *combined*.

Bad enough. But a still larger tax burden is concealed. High marginal tax rates combine with double taxation on savings to dampen enthusiasm for work and investment. The price tag? Harvard economist Dale Jorgenson told the Kemp Commission that incomes would rise by 15 to 20 per cent if these biases did not exist. That translates to about $5,000 in forgone income for a typical middle-class family. —Ed Rubenstein

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and libertarian immigrationists. Even then, the coalition wasn't large enough to rout legal reform—until it was joined by the Administration and the Religious Right.

The Administration, in yet another flip-flop, reversed its support for the Jordan Commission reforms and encouraged the elimination of legal-immigration reductions (pulling the rug out from under Democrats who had previously supported them). It had, however, the excuse of electoral calculation, since the Democratic coalition is fortified by new immigrants and the ethnic pressure groups they strengthen. How does one account, though, for the Christian Coalition's letter to conservative congressmen urging support of the effort to strike down reform "on behalf of members" of the Coalition?

It cannot be because of pressure from these members. Opinion polls show overwhelming support for lower immigration among religious conservatives. Nor does the letter's moral logic make sense. It says that proposed cuts in legal immigration "could severely damage the American family." What the Christian Coalition is upholding here is not the interests of families as such but those of immigrants' extended families—by defending the rule that once an immigrant is admitted, he is thereafter entitled to bring in his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts. And the reunification of foreign families in America often occurs at the expense of poor American families.

The Coalition's letter makes better sense as a case of Beltway loyalty. Elites in the liberal coalition have long sacrificed their grassroots members to their D.C. allies. Hence, their decline. The Christian Coalition's letter was similarly a payoff to its big-business and libertarian allies in the conservative coalition. We look forward to the Cato Institute's support for school prayer (just kidding).

Is reform of legal immigration doomed? Not at all. A large GOP majority is now committed to reform. More than two-thirds of House Republicans voted for Lamar Smith's bill, and it was defeated only by a shaky coalition. Expose that coalition to the light of day and it will surely shrink.

It is even possible that, with public pressure and leadership from Majority Leader Bob Dole, who has been sympathetic to reform, Simpson's legal-immigration cuts could be put back into the bill during the Senate floor debate in mid April. Still, it seems doubtful that significant reform will be enacted this year. After all, it took Congress 25 years to reduce immigration at the last turn of the century. Unfortunately, at current immigration levels, 25 years means 25 million more immigrants.

Rx: Obstruction

CURRENT tax law encourages employers to provide health insurance for workers, rather than giving them higher wages and letting them purchase insurance themselves. This third-party-payment system is at the root of the high costs and high rates of uninsurance we heard so much about during the great health-care debate of 1993–94. It is also the reason insurance isn't "portable": when you lose your job, you lose your insurance. The Kassebaum–Kennedy Health Insurance Reform Act seeks to solve these problems. But the bill would cripple the individual-insurance market through regulation. And it doesn't enact the one reform—Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs)—that would promote a shift away from employer-based health insurance.

The bill provides for "guaranteed issue": under certain circumstances, insurers would have to provide coverage whether they wanted to or not. For instance, people who lose or change their jobs and thus lose their group insurance could demand individual coverage from any insurer. Advocates of the Kassebaum–Kennedy bill claim that

The Week in Verse

Of signs and portents this world runs awry
I sing—and scan the equinoctic sky
Where rang'd from *Virgo* to the *Pleiades*
A *Comet* marketed in *Japanese*,
While as clear-sighted mortals here below
Observ'd with care a white dwarf call'd *Perot*.
Remarkable, this cloud of swirling gas,
Form'd in the image of a perfect ass,
With pow'r to influence mundane affairs
Re-tenanting the White House by backstairs.
Then *Dole* determin'd to at once gainsay
The hopes of *Labor* and the *NRA*.
To *Florida*, his prim'ry races run,
He took to read *Brookhiser's Washington*.
Republicans began to think: He'll do,
Although he's not, to *Ross*, GW Two.

Much advertis'd, the end of civil strife
In *Chechnya* gave to *Yeltsin* signs of life,
While *Bosnia* greeted *Madam* and *Ma'mselle C.*
Who'd come in peace—and in spring break for *Chelsea*.
Montana spawn'd rebellion of a sort
As *Freemen* gather'd in a small cohort
To raise a flag and *Uncle Sam* defy
With help and counsel from the *FBI*.

Weird happenings took place across the sea
In *Britain*, terroriz'd by *BSE*—
Though strange, for once it wasn't, anyhow,
A *Royal Person* playing the *Mad Cow*.
And *English* pride receiv'd another dart
From *Hollywood*, which honor'd the *Braveheart*
Of *Gibson* and his band of doughty *Scots*
Who show'd the world that they were *Sans-culottes*.
O *Freedom*! What a rabble thee proclaim
In want of underpants and in thy name.
Then *April Fools*' gone by, 'twas opportune:
The Heavens show'd favor and eclipsed the *Moon*.

—JUVENAL

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these regulations would increase insurance costs only slightly. And the advocates would be correct, *if* insurers were allowed to charge the new customers any premium they wished. Of course, if insurers could charge unaffordable rates, the bill would have accomplished nothing. In the real world, price controls would almost certainly be imposed—causing massive cost-shifting to the public. Shifting the sickest individuals from the group market to the smaller individual market could easily overwhelm and destroy that market. Moreover, if the Federal Government is going to get involved in insurance regulation at all, the first thing it should do is eliminate the proliferating and sometimes bizarre state mandates (coverage for acupuncture, etc.) that raise costs.

One would expect conservatives to reject instinctively any bill called "Kassebaum–Kennedy." Yet congressional Republicans are going along with it. Although Republicans in the House—and Senators Coverdell, Craig, Gramm, Lott, and Nickles—have tried to contain the damage by adding useful provisions like MSAs, Democrats and liberal Republicans are attacking these amendments because they would "kill the bill." (We should be so lucky.) More mystifyingly, Sen. Robert Bennett (R., Utah) fears that "if we start making amendments, the Democrats will turn it into a Hillary revival"—in which case, surely, a Republican Congress would show the wisdom of its Democratic predecessor, and not pass it.

Newt Gingrich and House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich have already capitulated, however, saying they won't insist on including MSAs if doing so would mean Clinton would veto the bill. They are eager to appear concerned about "economic anxiety" and desperate to have a record of accomplishments. And they have been reminded loudly and often that they advocated this type of incremental insurance reform two years ago, when they were trying to stave off the Clintons' comprehensive plan. So a congressional majority that gained power thanks (in part) to Clinton's health-care blunders now thinks it will extend its life by repeating them. It's time for obstructionism to come back in style.

A Truly Competent Man

A SPECTER is haunting the Dole campaign—the specter of competence. Bob Dole should be President, one hears, because he can *get things done*.

Competence must certainly be a large part of Dole's appeal, especially against Bill Clinton. But it cannot be the whole of it. As Charles Krauthammer points out, voters oust an incumbent when they believe the challenger will do things not only better, but differently.

Dole will not become an ideologue at this stage of his life. But an aspect of his skill as a legislator is surely that he sees when other politicians have failed to give the voters what they want—often the very things the politicians themselves have promised. Dole can therefore show his savvy, and help his campaign, by sending Bill Clinton a series of bills that he ought to sign, but won't.

1. Candidate Clinton promised at the 1992 Democratic convention to make abortion safe, legal, and rare. At that same convention, his minions prevented Pennsylvania Governor Bill Casey from speaking. Send President Clinton a national version of the restrictions on abortion—parental consent, a 24-hour waiting period—that Casey signed into law in Pennsylvania, and which polls show that voters support.

2. Candidate Clinton promised to end welfare as we know it, then vetoed last year's Republican bill, which offered modest but real reform. Send it to him again (and forget the compromise that liberal staffers for the National Governors' Conference have cooked up).

3. Candidate Clinton promised tax cuts for the middle class. Send him real cuts, in a seven-year balanced-budget plan (which, incidentally, will sideswipe Perot too). If you don't move fast, Clinton is just wily enough to propose a shiny new tax cut of his own, however bogus.

4. Candidate Clinton dissed Jesse Jackson and Sister Souljah, but President Clinton has said that the way to fix the racial quota system is, "Mend it, don't end it." He will have to defend this proposition in California, with the quota-ending California Civil Rights Initiative on the ballot. Give him a congressional bill to stumble over too.

5. Candidate Clinton thought the world would be a forum for armed social work—Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia. But the big powers of the Cold War are getting restless, and the rogue states continue to advance toward atom bombs. Send the President a proposal for missile defense. Call it the Ronald Reagan Space Shield for extra offense.

6. Military strength is not the only way the national issue is framed these days, as Pat Buchanan demonstrated. Voters have justified anxieties about American sovereignty and identity. Show you understand them by lowering the number of legal immigrants, and increasing the proportion of skilled immigrants in the total.

These bills, and Clinton's reaction to them, will define your image and your campaign a lot more than boilerplate in San Diego. They will also show real competence.

NATO Watch

PRESIDENT Vaclav Havel sounded an ominous warning in a recent speech to the Czech parliament: The specter of a "new Munich" was hovering over Europe as the Western powers delayed extending security guarantees to the Central European democracies. Indeed, NATO has put off any further consideration of admitting new members until the end of the year at the earliest. Here at home, the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), an umbrella group of 18 organizations representing some twenty million Americans of Central and East European descent, has expressed "alarm" at the Administration's foot-dragging.

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Fortunately, pressures on the Administration are now mounting. Republicans in Congress are preparing a "transition assistance" bill authorizing $60 million in military aid to smooth the way for Polish, Czech, and Hungarian membership in NATO. A Paris gathering of conservative party chiefs from 29 European countries (the Democratic European Union) insisted on NATO's right to admit new members and rejected any Russian veto. A group of Europeans and Americans from all parties, the New Atlantic Initiative, is preparing for a congress in Prague in May (to be addressed by Havel, Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, and the former deputy prime minister of Poland, Leszek Balcerowicz) that will call for integrating Central Europe as soon as possible into the Western family, based on both NATO and a transatlantic free-trade area.

The pressures seem to be having an effect. Secretary of State Warren Christopher promised in Prague on March 20 that NATO was "on track" toward enlargement and "will not keep the new democracies in the waiting room forever." The British government made a similar commitment, in the dramatic form of pledges by the Queen on visits to Prague and Warsaw.

The Russians, indeed, may be bending. Boris Yeltsin, on a trip to Norway, suggested that the Central Europeans might emulate the French model—joining the Alliance but not its military structures. Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov similarly hinted that Alliance membership would not be so bad if NATO's troops, weapons (especially nukes), and infrastructure did not move eastward. These Russian conditions, unacceptable in their present form, are an improvement over Moscow's previous total rejection. Some sort of dialogue with the Russians on avoiding the remilitarization of Central Europe might be in order—*provided* that Moscow calls off the campaign against NATO enlargement.

Undoubtedly the Russians have their own motives for this new "flexibility." They will try to confuse the issue and to extract as many Western concessions as possible. The safest course is simply to proceed rapidly with NATO enlargement. The sooner it becomes a *fait accompli*, the sooner realists in Moscow will come to terms with it. What is clear is that the Administration's excuses for procrastination have run out.

Against Infanticide

THE House gave final approval (286 to 129) on March 27 to a ban on partial-birth abortions except for those deemed necessary to save the life of the mother. The *Los Angeles Times* recently described this gruesome procedure: "[A] physician extracts a fetus feet first from the womb and through the birth canal until all but its head is exposed. Then the tips of surgical scissors are thrust into the base of the fetus's skull, a suction catheter is inserted through the opening, and the brain is removed." Seventy-two Democrats decided they couldn't defend the indefensible and supported the ban—including Minority Leader Dick Gephardt and the party's congressional campaign chairman, Martin Frost, who had previously opposed it.

President Clinton, however, plans to veto the bill. Having "studied and prayed about this issue . . . for many months," he insists that these abortions be available to protect the (broadly defined) "health" of the mother. He supports an amendment that would render the ban meaningless in practice. Pro-choice feminists, who will provide critical energy and resources to Clinton this fall, will be gratified; but his veto will seriously jeopardize his attempts to appeal to Catholic voters.

The Catholic hierarchy—which normally speaks to Democrats in dulcet tones—has reacted to the threatened veto with outrage. The president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop Anthony M. Pilla, says, "To veto this bill would also be a profound moral mistake, reaching beyond our longstanding disagreement on abortion." Cardinal Hickey of Washington refers to the procedure as "one-fifth abortion and four-fifths infanticide" and calls the health exception a "camouflage." On April 1, Hickey joined Cardinal Law of Boston at a candlelight vigil outside the White House to encourage the President to sign the ban. Cardinal Law states that the practice Clinton defends is "unworthy of a civilized people," and Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago declared that a Clinton veto would send a "very disturbing message" to which "persons of good will must give serious consideration as they cast their ballots in November."

The White House is reportedly counting on Catholics not to be single-issue voters. It highlights the Administration's agreement with the Bishops on a range of "social-justice issues"—apparently believing that Clinton's support for hiking the minimum wage should cause Catholics to overlook his support for infanticide. But such hopes are as politically obtuse as they are morally repugnant.

Clinton's veto of the ban on partial-birth abortions will isolate him in the camp of abortion extremists. The House is expected to override the veto, and Bob Dole

It's Tea Time

Perot will play the Hatter,
Reprising '92.
Dole's reading for the dormouse,
While Hillary will do
The Alice role as hubby
Grins cat-like from a tree,
Intrigued by double-breasted birds
That strut suggestively.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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should see that the Senate attempts to do the same. A veto could come back to haunt Clinton in November—and well beyond that.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I know you have sailed a lot and written about it, but I didn't know how "easy" sailing was until I saw the following in the current *Yachting* . . .

ASK THE EXPERTS

QUESTION: I ran aground on a rock last fall and put a sizable ding in the leading edge of my lead keel. I'd like to fix it myself. How do I repair the ding?

ANSWER: Easy. Dry the keel with a heat gun. Remove lead chips or fairing material from the ding (wear a dust mask). Scrub the area with a wire brush. The impact probably left a bulge behind the ding. Forge this back into place by lightly tapping the lead with a ball-peen hammer. After forging, plane the remaining bulge flush with the undamaged part of the keel. Use a sharp woodworking plane set for a medium cut. Gougeon Brothers Inc. says to lightly coat the lead with petroleum jelly before you plane. Clean with solvent; scrub with a wire brush to expose fresh lead. Coat the area with epoxy; scrub with the wire brush to expose fresh lead to the epoxy. Fill the voids with WEST epoxy/407 filler mixed to the consistency of peanut butter. If the dent is larger than a golf ball, fill a little at a time and let cure between applications. Sand with a 50-grit sanding block; fill the remaining voids with 407. Cure, sand again, apply three coats of epoxy, sand again, then paint.

I hope you don't have too many dings this summer, Mr. Buckley.

E. L. Stoops
Newport, R.I.

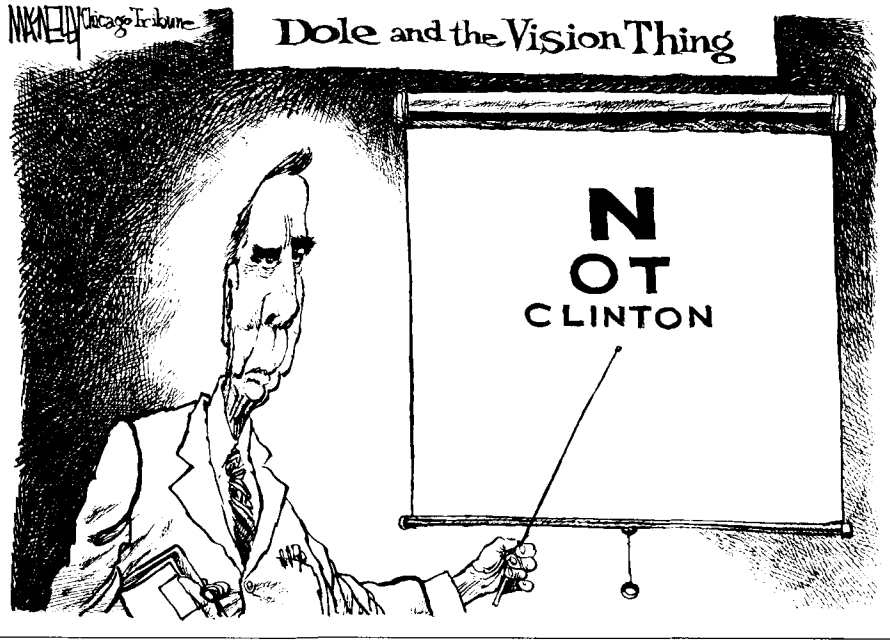
Dear Mr. Stoops: Thank you very much. That's good advice but, you know, a little superficial. Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Some additional thoughts, if I may, on Mr. Bruce Larson's question [Dec. 11] about whether one can be both a Christian *and* a capitalist in view of Matthew 6:19–21, 24. If by "capitalist" he really means either "greedy," as in the lexicon of the Left, or obsessed with accumulating material wealth in this age, which one must eventually give up (Jesus' point), then I would agree. If, however, he means by that term one who is free to earn, have, use, and dispose of his own personal wealth and property, then the opposite question is pertinent: How can one *not* be a capitalist and be a Christian? God's warning to Israel through Samuel (I Sam. 8:10–22) when the nation wanted a king (a strong central government was *not* in God's original plan for Israel, which had judges with limited functions) shows the Divine view clearly. In a studied use of "take" He warns them the king would *take* for himself myriad forms of wealth and property which are repeatedly styled as "your" and "yours" (sons, daughters, fields, vineyards, olive groves, seed, etc.). He caps off His warning with the ultimate consequence of letting the state "take" of what's "yours"—"and you yourselves will become his servants" (8:17). Sounds to me like He's partial to private property and wealth—economic freedom; Israel's "wickedness was great" in asking for the statist alternative (I Sam. 12:17). Besides His endorsement of the jot and tittle of the law, Jesus Himself confirmed one's right "to do what I wish with what is my own" (Matt. 20:15). Speaking for Jesus, Paul even refuses coerced compassion, saying, "but without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by compulsion, but of your own free will" (Philemon 14). Would that coercive utopians of every stripe shared such respect for the choices of others. While condemning greed and mammon-centered living, the Bible most emphatically endorses private property and opposes state confiscation of wealth and its forcible redistribution, even for noble ends. Charitable giving is heavily endorsed, but it is to be individual and voluntary, even—and especially—for the wealthy (I Tim. 6:17–19).

Sincerely,
Rev. Timothy D. Crater
Special Rep., Office of Public Affairs,
National Association of Evangelicals
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Crater: Amen. Cordially, —WFB



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CAPITAL SCENE

Republican like Me

RAMESH PONNURU

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

BRIAN Jones calls it "the old voting-booth story." It has happened to him and a few acquaintances. "You go down to vote, you stand in line, you get there, and immediately the person who's checking names . . . will hand you a Democratic ballot." When you ask for the other ballot, he says, "often there's a look of puzzlement and maybe then a look of embarrassment." The confusion arises because Jones is black—the president of the Center for New Black Leadership, a fledgling conservative group in Washington. He's more amused by a recent trip to a magazine shop: "I went and I bought NATIONAL REVIEW. Guy gave me a puzzled look and said, 'Doin' a little opposition research, huh?' "

Such incidents contribute to what Clarence Thomas once described as "the loneliness of the black conservative." That isolation has not abated much over the years. In a recent survey by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a whopping 88 per cent of blacks viewed President Clinton favorably. Black support for the Democrats is so overwhelming that it can mask other trends. The famed "gender gap"—women vote for Democrats, men for Republicans—is a product of black women's strong support for the Democrats; women of other races lean toward the GOP (albeit not as strongly as their brothers).

Black identification with the Democrats is a constant source of frustration for Republicans. It's also, in theory, an opportunity: a modest rise in the Republicans' share of black voters—say, to 25 per cent—would have seismic electoral consequences: the GOP would have a lock on the Senate, and Democrats wouldn't need to bother putting up presidential candidates. Republican analyst James Pinkerton thinks such a shift would also have "secondary effects on whites," bringing into the GOP moderate suburbanites who have been turned off by an all-white party.

Republicans have been reaching out to blacks more than in the past. A record 25 black Republicans ran for Congress in 1994. Representatives Jim Talent (R., Mo.) and J. C. Watts (R., Okla.) will soon introduce a "community renewal" bill that will for the first time give Republicans a distinctive urban policy, based on empowerment. The bill is part of a moral crusade, not an attempt to court black voters. "If we don't begin as a society to renew these neighborhoods, I don't know how the Republic can continue," says Rep. Talent. But he has faith that if Republicans "really make an effort to understand and represent [blacks] first, the politics will follow." Some of the most prominent advocates of empowerment and "outreach" to minorities—notably Jack Kemp and Newt Gingrich—have sounded cautionary notes about taking on racial preferences. Many more Republicans view empowerment as a way to soften the blow of eliminating racial preferences.

Talent and Watts themselves resist that linkage. One problem with viewing empowerment as a replacement for preferences is that the two policies chiefly benefit different groups: middle- and upper-class blacks and white women in the latter case, low-income minority members in the former. Moreover, linking empowerment and the repeal of preferences could create the impression that Republicans are giving a sop to blacks to assuage their shame at ending affirmative action, thus undercutting both efforts. Republicans should certainly handle the issue of preferences carefully; they need to avoid appearing to single out blacks or to exploit white resentments. Concern about many blacks' sensitivities, says Jones, "should simply temper your approach, but not necessarily soften your resolve."

Scholar Abigail Thernstrom, now at the Manhattan Institute, thinks that some Republicans are skittish about preferences because they "have got fantasies, they're in la-la land about how many black Republican votes there are out there." Pessimists like Mrs. Thernstrom believe that blacks' disproportionate dependence on the Federal Government makes them unlikely Republican prospects. A high proportion of the black middle class is employed in the public sector, and racial preferences benefit better-educated blacks. While downsizing government and dismantling color-conscious laws may serve blacks' long-term interests, they do not serve the interests of black elites. (Hence, libertarian legal activist Clint Bolick declares, "Ironically, it's among lower-income black voters that Republicans probably have their greatest opportunities.") In addition, Mrs. Thernstrom argues, "There is a general fear in the black community of the protective arm of government being removed, for understandable historical reasons."

THE evidence to date supports the pessimists. Both of the black Republicans in Congress, Watts and Gary Franks (Conn.), come from overwhelmingly white districts. In the few cases where a Republican politician has won a large proportion of black votes—as in Ohio Gov. George Voinovich's 1994 re-election bid, often cited by optimists—it's usually because of low turnout. Jones points to a recent Joint

Mr. Ponnuru is NR*'s national reporter.*

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Center poll showing that 16 per cent of blacks aged 18 to 25 identify with the GOP as evidence that there's a "slight opening" for the party among young blacks. But it's likely to be evanescent: the Joint Center's David Bositis says that his polls in the mid Eighties found a similar percentage among that same age cohort back then. Now that they're older, they're no more Republican than the rest of the black population. The Republican Party, Bositis concludes, "is something younger blacks have tried on, experimented with."

THE figure most often cited by optimists is that a third of blacks identify themselves as conservatives. Bolick argues, "That gap [between self-identified conservatives and self-identified Republicans] is exactly where our opportunity lies." But Bositis points out that those "conservatives" want to cut defense and expand urban programs, raise education spending, and maintain affirmative action. Their conservatism is more a matter of values than of politics. The politician who best represents these conservative blacks, favoring government programs while voicing conservative themes on social issues, is Bill Clinton. A sensible minority-outreach strategy would place a higher priority on attracting Hispanic and Asian voters, whose views make them more available to the GOP.

Which doesn't mean Republicans should give up on black voters. Recruiting more black candidates would help. Republican consultant Dylan Glenn argues that even if such candidates are elected by white voters, their presence would make blacks more comfortable with the GOP. And blacks are more conservative than whites on some political issues, such as school prayer, vouchers, and crime. Talent and Watts originally did not plan to include school choice in their bill, but added it at the insistence of minority community groups.

But no set of issues, however appealing, will get very far with black voters if Republicans aren't willing to take their message to them. Republican candidates usually write off black voters because campaigning among them offers no immediate payoff in the current election. "If every Republican spoke once a month at a black church," says Bolick, "they'd be shocked at the positive reception." Horace Cooper, legislative counsel to House Majority Leader Dick Armey, suggests that racial gerrymandering has been another obstacle: "A conservative Republican candidate [doesn't have] on a regular basis to interact with a predominantly black population. You also don't have the circumstance where that Republican candidate sees it's in his interest to appeal to that vote to get elected."

Jack Kemp used to act as a bridge between Republicans and blacks. Could Colin Powell perform this role today? Bositis guesses that a Dole–Powell ticket (which he doesn't expect) would receive about 20 per cent of the black vote, but that the gains wouldn't trickle down to Republican congressional candidates. Putting Powell on the ticket, moreover, could backfire spectacularly, and not only by inflaming right-wingers. Liberals and the press (to the extent that there's a distinction) would define the general to the left of where he really is and constantly distinguish Dole's point of view from his. Instead of Dole's being helped, Powell would be hurt. It's clear that Powell has the potential to be an enormous asset to the Republican Party. But as Pinkerton notes, "Nobody, including Powell himself, has found a way to showcase him as a voice for Republicans."

If there's any good news here for Republicans, it's that doing the right thing is the best bet for long-term gains among blacks, even if it arouses opposition in the short term. Downsizing government and ending preferences would reduce blacks' dependence on the state; and ending set-asides in government contracting would also disrupt the Democrats' urban machines. But if this analysis is correct, any major swing in the black vote would have to follow, not lead, enactment of a significant portion of the conservative agenda; and it would have to follow, not lead, a realignment. The bleak implication: if a major swing among blacks to the Republican Party is a precondition for a realignment, there probably isn't going to be one. □

Living with Nationalism

DAVID FRUM

WASHINGTON, D.C.

YOU DON'T have to like Pat Buchanan to learn from him. In 1992 and again in 1996, Mr. Buchanan has proved the power and importance of a new cluster of issues, "national" issues, that a Republican Party dominated by social and economic conservatives has until now ignored. Condemn Mr. Buchanan's positions on these issues as much as you like. The discontents to which he speaks are real.

But what precisely are they?

Many of Mr. Buchanan's otherwise fiercest critics believe that it's his bleak economic message that galvanizes his followers. The *New York Times* ran a five-part front-page series on the "downsizing of the American economy" soon after Mr. Buchanan's New Hampshire win, essentially endorsing his grim description of the labor market. One question, though: If the American people have been waiting with bated breath for someone to come along and tell them that the economy stinks, that big business is to blame, and that protectionism will set everything to rights, why isn't Ralph Nader President? Why didn't Tom Harkin sweep to power in 1992? Or Dick Gephardt or Pat Robertson in 1988?

All of those characters trumpeted the same Midnight in America tune that Mr. Buchanan has made his own in 1996, and none of them came anywhere near equaling his success. But while Democrats began dabbling with economic nationalism in the early 1980s in a desperate attempt to find a populist basis for their otherwise thoroughly unpopular views, Mr. Buchanan's economic nationalism is something very different. It is just one component of a coherent philosophy, a "nationalist conservatism," that is now for better or worse taking its place alongside social conservatism and economic conservatism as a component of the Republican coalition.

It has taken twenty years to integrate religious conservatives into the Republican Party, but by now even pro-abortion Republicans have come to accept the need for restrictions on the practice. Republicans of all stripes agree that

Mr. Frum is a senior fellow of the Manhattan Institute and author of Dead Right *(New Republic Books).*

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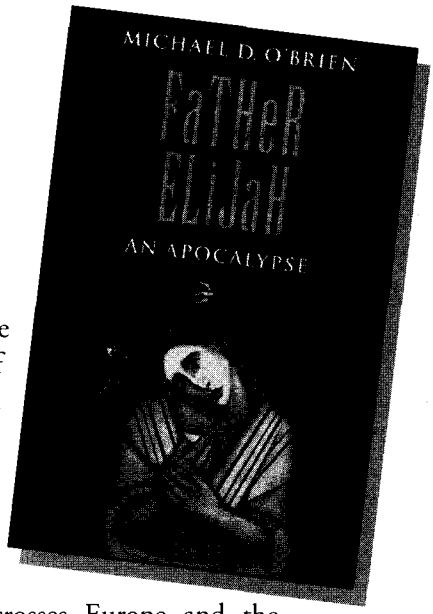
FATHER ELIJAH

AN APOCALYPSE

by Michael O'Brien



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public institutions have to tolerate more religious expression than the Supreme Courts of the 1960s and 1970s would tolerate. And in school choice, Republicans created a brilliant mechanism to harmonize the need for higher educational standards with the desire of many parents for education that respects religious faith.

Something similar will need to happen between free-market and nationalist conservatives. What might such an understanding look like?

Some of Mr. Buchanan's nationalist themes resonate with all conservatives, such as recognition of English as the sole official language of the United States. If not all, then nearly all conservatives would probably also sympathize with an interest-based foreign policy—even if they drew the lines of American interest in less parochial fashion than Mr. Buchanan would, to include the Persian Gulf, Western Europe, and East Asia.

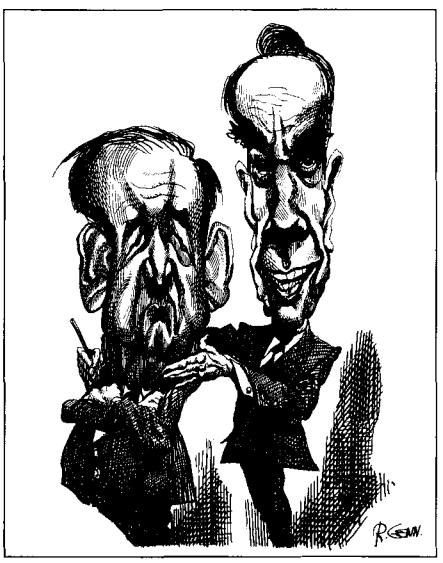
Other Buchananite themes will never be acceptable to economic conservatives. Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council has repeatedly asked why free trade can be a litmus test when abortion isn't. But free trade isn't some technical issue of public policy—it is the foundation of world peace and prosperity. The horror of the catastrophe that American protectionism could touch off today—that it did touch off in the 1920s—makes protectionism an issue on which compromise isn't possible. And, as the experience of Harkin et al. suggests, it's an issue on which economic conservatives don't *need* to compromise: the American voter is securely with them.

Furthermore, there is something about the intellectual logic of the protectionist position that draws adherents, almost against their will, from McKinley Republicanism to Jerry Brown kookery: from attacks on Mexican avocado growers to alarm over the international machinations of the bankers at Goldman Sachs and the sinister, secretive plotters behind the New World Order.

But in between those issues on which the conservative movement is already nationalist (like official English) and those on which it ought never to flirt with nationalism (like trade and paranoia), there is an intermediate zone that responsible politicians should be willing to investigate. And the most important issue in that zone is immigration.

According to exit polls, immigration ranked second only to abortion in motivating Mr. Buchanan's voters. It may be irrational—to a very considerable extent it *is* irrational—but these people see in immigration an important cause of the sense of social balkanization to which the editors of *Commentary* were moved to devote their fiftieth-anniversary issue. They believe, not altogether without evidence, that immigration is helping to hold down their wages. They believe, with considerably more evidence, that immigration is fueling the growth of the welfare costs under which local government groans. And they believe—and who can honestly say that they are wrong?—that the sheer mass of newcomers is remaking the American social fabric in unpredictable ways and at high speed.

Economic conservatives can believe



Roman Genn

that immigration's benefits exceed its harms. They should struggle to remind American voters how much immigration's harms can be explained by the welfare-state temptations that big government extends to newcomer and old-stock American alike. But it's hard to go on insisting that the anxieties and concerns that motivated Buchanan's anti-immigration voters should be altogether ignored. Some of those voters may well be bigots. So are some of the voters opposed to affirmative action. But most anti-immigration voters, like most Americans, are fair-minded people who would like social change to proceed at a slower pace than the pace at which it has been proceeding these past twenty years.

To these nationalist voters, economic conservatives should hold out a four-leafed olive branch:

1. The laws on immigration already on the books ought to be enforced, as all valid laws should be. On the campaign trail, candidates promise to get tough on illegal immigration. But an effective crackdown will oblige economic conservatives to accept something that they have so far been reluctant to accept: employer sanctions.

2. The case for immigration has been gravely weakened by the evidence amassed by George Borjas about the rising propensity of immigrants to end up on the dole. Republicans should take up again their determination to limit the benefits of the welfare state to citizens. Perhaps prospective immigrants could also be asked to demonstrate that they are unlikely to become public charges.

3. Improving the quality of the immigrants to the United States may alleviate some concerns over quantity. More than five-sevenths of the legal immigrants to the United States are admitted because a more or less close relative got here first, not because they offer skills or capital from which the American economy can benefit. Canada and Australia weight their immigration quotas heavily in favor of skilled workers; there's no reason the United States can't likewise switch away from family-reunification immigration policies to a more remunerative alternative.

4. By great bad luck, the last rise in the main immigration quota—from 500,000 to 700,000—occurred in 1991, just as the U.S. economy was slipping into five years of slow economic growth. If 500,000 legal immigrants a year sufficed to fuel the Reagan boom, that number is very likely to be more than sufficient for the economic growth of the 1990s. Furthermore, most of those spots should be reserved for skilled workers and immigrants with capital rather than the relatives of those already here.

The politics of Pat Buchanan are, and should be, repugnant to economic conservatives. The tone and style of his politics, if emulated, would condemn the Republicans to fringe-party status: and rightly so. When George C. Wallace, a figure like Buchanan in some ways, erupted into national politics in 1968, William F. Buckley Jr. observed that anyone who figured out how to capture the eight million votes that Wallace won, baptize them, and turn them into honest Republicans would have done the Republic a mighty service. The service needs to be repeated. And compromise on immigration will be an indispensable element of it. □

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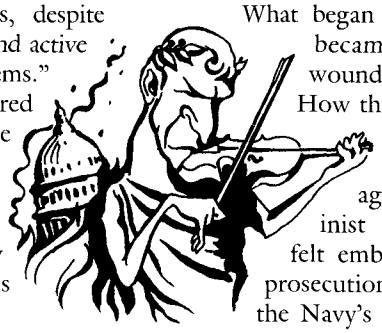
BREAD & CIRCUSES

COMMANDER Robert Stumpf, former commanding officer of the Navy's elite Blue Angels precision-flying outfit, wasn't counting on unfriendly fire when his promotion to captain was forwarded to the Senate for approval in 1994. He holds the Distinguished Flying Cross for his performance in the Gulf War, where he led a strike that destroyed 21 Iraqi storage facilities for SCUD missiles, despite "bursting anti-aircraft fire and active surface-to-air missile systems." And since he had been cleared by a Board of Inquiry the previous year of any misconduct arising from the notorious 1991 Tailhook Convention, he had every reason to think that his promotion was assured.



Instead, he became yet another male victim of Tailhook.

Bob Stumpf had attended Tailhook '91 in order to accept a "best in the Navy" award on behalf of his squadron for its performance in the Gulf. Following allegations of sexual assaults by some officers, the Department of Defense launched an investigation, as a result of which the Inspector General alleged misconduct by Stumpf and scores of other aviators. (Investigators ignored evidence of misconduct by female officers.) But the IG report fared badly whenever it came before the courts. One military judge tossed out Tailhook charges because of the report's unreliability and its "possibly abusive treatment" of junior officers. Two federal judges found the report to be utterly untrustworthy. And Stumpf challenged its allegations against him.

Curiously, he found it difficult to get formally charged. When he refused nonjudicial punishment and demanded a court martial, the Navy declined to prosecute. Eventually, it granted an administrative hearing in 1993, at which Stumpf defended himself effectively against the report's charges.

He had flown to the convention in an F/A-18. But the Board of Inquiry found this to be a legitimate training exercise. And although Stumpf was present in a hotel suite when a stripper performed (which is tasteless, but legal), the Board concluded that he had left the room and retired for the evening before she engaged in sexual misconduct with another pilot. So he was unanimously cleared of any wrongdoing in the Tailhook affair—and yet the accusation of misconduct was not erased from his record. What began as an investigation became a witchhunt, and wound up a blacklist.

How this happened tells us a lot about military and political courage in the face of feminist assaults. The Senate felt embarrassed that so few prosecutions had emerged from the Navy's own investigation of Tailhook, which had been portrayed in the media as a kind of mass rape. So in 1992 it demanded that future promotion lists flag the file of any officer "potentially implicated in Tailhook-related misconduct." The discredited IG report was apparently the basis for this blacklist, which now contains the names of 73 officers, some cleared of wrongdoing like Stumpf, others never even charged—as in the extraordinary case of Lieutenant John M. Cooney.

During its 1992 investigation, Cooney had told the Inspector General's office that a witness was mistaken in placing him in a hotel corridor on the Saturday night of the convention. Indeed, he had returned home to California that morning. The IG concluded, on no very clear grounds, that his denial was a "false statement," and his name duly went on the blacklist. Cooney had no idea he had a career-destroying document in his file until last spring, when he was denied transfer from the Naval Reserve to the regular Navy.

But documentary evidence (previously reviewed by Defense investigators) proves that Cooney returned his rented Cessna to a San Diego airfield at 11 A.M. on the day in question. After trying for months to clear his name, Cooney has finally got public attention, and his transfer has been approved.

Though publicity helped Cooney correct an injustice, that has not worked for Stumpf. The media attention to his case clearly angers the Senate, which accordingly seems determined to prolong his ordeal. Exactly why is unclear, but it looks as if members of the Armed Services Committee are simply miffed.

They had originally recommended that the Senate approve Stumpf's promotion, only to be told later that the Navy had mistakenly failed to identify him as "potentially implicated" in the Tailhook affair. So, in June 1994, the Committee asked the Navy to hold up Stumpf's promotion until it had reviewed all relevant material. Secretary of the Navy John Dalton then met with Stumpf, reviewed the evidence, cited Stumpf's "distinguished and heroic service to his country," and reaffirmed his support for the promotion. Then the Committee held a closed session in October 1995 and concluded that Stumpf should not be promoted. But it never met Stumpf and afforded him no opportunity to refute the charges. Secretary Dalton nonetheless bowed to their pressure and removed Stumpf's name from the list.

DALTON and the Chief of Naval Operations still back Stumpf's promotion, and he enjoys outspoken support from the Navy League, the Association of Naval Aviation, and the Naval Reserve Association. But if Stumpf has friends in the Navy community, he also has at least one well-placed enemy at the Pentagon. A confidential letter was recently leaked from there to the Senate in an attempt to prejudice his case. Elaine Donnelly of the Center for Military Readiness says, "The leaked private letter is just the latest injustice. It's now up to the Senate to defend Stumpf's right to defend himself."

The senators, instead, have dug in against him and speak disparagingly of his supporters. When Senators Nunn (D., Ga.), Coats (R., Ind.), Byrd (D., W.Va.), and Exon (D., Neb.), clearly stung by media criticism, went to the Senate floor on March 21 to praise one another for their fair treatment of Stumpf, not one of them saw fit to note that this Navy hero had been found innocent by a Board of Inquiry.

When it comes to closing ranks, the U.S. Senate could teach the Navy plenty.

—KATE O'BEIRNE

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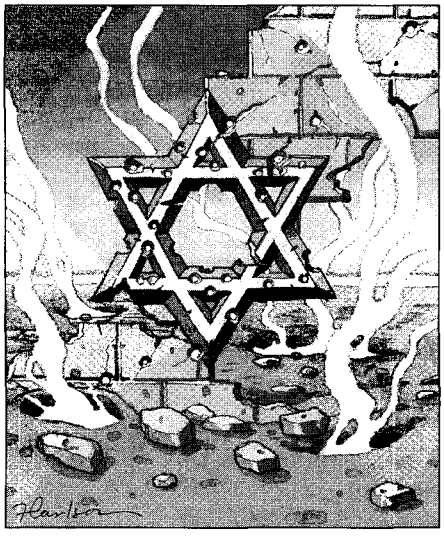
ON THE SCENE

Israel Unarmed

RAEL JEAN ISAAC



Frederick H. Carlson

JERUSALEM

THERE has been much activity since the series of terror attacks in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in February and March: the anti-terrorism summit of chiefs of state, including President Clinton, at Sharm el Sheikh on the Sinai peninsula; strong speeches by Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and a sealing off of Israel in her pre-1967 borders from Palestinian Arabs; sweeps and large-scale arrests by Palestinian Authority police, especially in Gaza.

And yet the almost inevitable outcome is no change at all. Indeed some of the measures being put forward, like the greater information-sharing between Israeli and Palestinian security forces urged by the CIA—are apt to make matters considerably worse.

To understand why, it is necessary to examine what has gone wrong with Israel's once-vaunted counter-terrorist capabilities. In the past, in the areas under her direct control, Israel relied upon an elaborate intelligence network based on Arab informants. Although the system was not foolproof, terrorist cells were routinely disrupted and their members arrested before they had a chance to operate, and the fear of exposure discouraged others from forming. Where Israel did not exert political control, notably Lebanon, she struck at the enemy infrastructure through everything from bombing, ground incursions, and naval blockade to assassination of terrorist leaders. Finally, Israel was serious about punishing terrorists and their collaborators (e.g., imposing long prison sentences, deporting people, blowing up the houses of terrorists' families).

Israel has not only lost her capabilities in each of these areas, but has deliberately undercut them in her effort to placate and shore up the Palestinian Authority.

1. *Intelligence*. In the wake of the last series of bombings, American Secretary of Defense William Perry said "good intelligence" is the "key to success" in the battle against terror. But in September 1995, the Israel Defense Forces' head of intelligence research, Brigadier-General Yaakov Amidror, said, "Israel's intelligence capability in Gaza has been reduced to zero, and a similar situation is liable to occur in Judea and Samaria when we transfer control to the Palestinian Authority."

One important reason is that over the last decade Israel has failed to live up to its promises to its informants. An estimated 1,270 Arabs who cooperated with Israeli intelligence have been murdered since the beginning of the *intifada*, many of them since the signing of the peace accords in 1993.

More damaging still, this January Israel released 120 prisoners who had been given life sentences for murdering Arab informants. This elicited a strong protest from Avi Mashriki, chairman of the Association of Arab Collaborators: "Israel is destroying its entire network of internal military intelligence, not to speak of the moral overtones of this act. The murders were perpetrated in cold blood, after collaborators were tortured, hung from telephone poles, even burned alive. Now the government is rewarding these murderers with their release?" Mashriki warned that "Israel is destroying the antennas it has in the Arab-populated areas."

Underscoring Mashriki's warning, thirty former informants, protesting Israel's failure to provide them protection and a new identity, recently turned themselves over to Gabril Rajoub, the much-feared head of the PLO's Secret Security Police, who promised amnesty if they turned over all the information they had on Israeli intelligence networks.

2. *Terrorist infrastructure*. Fearing that direct strikes against terrorist strongholds in areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority would fatally undermine Yasir Arafat, Israel has effectively established safe havens for terrorists at the edge of its population centers. In Gaza, in Jericho, and now in Jenin, Bethlehem, Kalilya, and the other Arab towns turned over to Arafat, Hamas and Islamic Jihad have been free to establish bases and training camps, recruit and indoctrinate followers, and build up their arms supplies. Those who are not suicide bombers can return here to safety. In theory, Israel has the right to hot pursuit, a clause inserted in the Oslo accords at Israel's insistence. But army regulations tell soldiers not to act on it.

Since, thanks to its self-imposed restrictions, Israel cannot strike at terrorist bases, it is limited to assassinations of terrorist leaders, the most prominent action being that which eliminated Yayha Ayyash, the so-called "Engineer." The recent rash of bombings was ostensibly to avenge his death.

3. *Punishment*. Israel has all but given up this crucial element of the anti-terror triad. In an illuminating study written before the most recent attacks, *Israeli Counter-terrorism in the Shadow of Oslo*, Israeli terrorism expert Boaz Ganor describes how Israel has erased one red line after another in its massive program of terrorist releases after the Oslo accords.

At first the government said it would release only those arrested for disturbing the peace during the *intifada* and those under administrative detention. Shortly thereafter, the government said it would

Mrs. Isaac is the author of Israel Divided *(Johns Hopkins University Press) and* Parties and Politics of Israel *(Longman).*

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release members of Fatah who had been convicted of crimes but who had no "blood on their hands." Then the government decided to release Fatah members convicted of murdering Arabs who had cooperated with Israel, but drew the line at members of radical Islamic groups. In August 1994, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said, "It is unthinkable that Israel would release prisoners belonging to Hamas or to Islamic Jihad."

The unthinkable soon became thinkable. The government now merely asked members of the "rejectionist" organizations to sign statements that they would not engage in terror against Israel in the future. When the prisoners refused en masse, Israel in May 1995 concocted a vague formula by which the released terrorists would "renounce the ways of violence, each according to his conscience." When some refused to sign even this, Israel released them anyway in August 1995.

The last red line had barred release of terrorists with Jewish blood on their hands. Oslo II promised release of those who had "only" wounded Israeli citizens. Thus, Ganor observes bitingly, "a terrorist whose knife merely slashed the spleen or lung of an Israeli will be released, but one whose blade penetrated an inch deeper and pierced his victim's heart will remain behind bars until the next reshuffling of criteria."

The next reshuffling was not long in coming. In September 1995, during his talks with Arafat in Taba, Peres agreed to release prisoners, regardless of their crime, who were young, sick, elderly, female, or who had served ten years. Here was a new criterion indeed—you could be a mass murderer of Jews and in ten years be out of jail. Ganor points out that the government never stopped to consider the strategic damage caused by the mass release of jailed terrorists, with its shattering of the deterrence principle, the foundation of anti-terror strategy.

THE Israeli government also abandoned deportation, its last traditional punishment for terrorists, after the fiasco that followed its expulsion of 415 senior Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders in 1992. They camped on the Lebanese border and gave TV interviews while the world condemned Israel on the nightly news. In the end Israel backed down and not only permitted them to return but, with less publicity, acceded to a PLO demand that earlier deportees be allowed back as well. It is widely believed that, during their stay in Lebanon, Hezbollah trained Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists in the suicide attacks that have since become their trademark.

Deprived by its own policies of almost all its traditional means for fighting terror, Israel must rely on the Palestinian Authority to ensure the security of its citizens. At the outset of the peace process, then–Foreign Minister Peres declared, "Why should we chase the Hamas terrorists? Let the PLO do it." The Israeli government's notion was that Arafat would hunt down the terrorists (without the impediment of Israeli civil-rights groups, as Rabin observed) and, in the case of those who had maimed or murdered Israelis, extradite them to Israel, as the agreement between Israel and the PLO stipulated.

But as opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu recently observed, "the idea that Arafat will be our subcontractor to fight terrorism won't work." The Palestinian Authority employs a variety of ruses, including, as Ganor points out, legal loopholes that Israel agreed to in order to win its extradition agreement with the PLO.

Those whom the Palestinian Authority is serious about capturing and punishing are Arab collaborators with Israel, past or present. They have been captured, tortured, and murdered or sentenced to long prison terms. Ganor reports that such is their fear of Arafat's internal-security police that suspected collaborators have volunteered to serve as suicide bombers to clear their names and those of their families.

The most recent bombings have not changed the situation. The condemnations are louder and the performance is more elaborate, with more arrests and on stage, an assemblage of world leaders denouncing terrorism. But Israel's ability to deal with terror has not improved. The Israeli government has no leverage—or more accurately, as Ganor points out, is unable to use the leverage it has. After each attack, Israel declares that it will continue the negotiations with Arafat, since to halt or suspend them would be to give the terrorists a victory.

But the refusal to suspend the "peace process," no matter what terrorist acts are committed, makes terror a no-lose proposition for both Hamas and Arafat. Both know the peace process will continue no matter what they do or, in the case of Arafat, fail to do. If Arafat knew that the price of further territorial concessions from Israel was preventing terror strikes by Hamas, he would have an inducement to act forcefully. On the other hand, a genuine showdown with Hamas might weaken Arafat fatally. The Labor government, whose political fortunes are umbilically tied to those of Arafat, is afraid to take that chance.

THE Israeli government is left with only one tool to fight terror—sealing off the territories. Although the border remains permeable, each time closure has been used, it has been effective in preventing large-scale attacks within the borders of pre-1967 Israel. In the wake of the last bombings it has been used once again, this time so strictly that Arabs initially are prevented from moving from one sector of the autonomous areas to another. But again, each time, the government is unwilling to maintain the closure too long for fear that it will weaken Arafat's prestige and lead to greater internal pressures, and it is already being eased.

The CIA's current well-meaning attempts to strengthen the anti-terror effort by fostering greater intelligence cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority can only make matters worse. Such cooperation has already been occurring, with Israel's General Security Service passing information to the Palestinian Authority for the purpose of stopping terrorist attacks. But since the Palestinian Authority's chief priority is to eliminate Israeli intelligence sources, the General Security Service, as Ganor points out, is cutting off the branch on which it sits. Furthermore, Smadar Perry, a journalist for the daily *Yediot Achronot*, investigated the Palestinian Authority's use of Israeli intelligence and found that, so far from apprehending terrorists, it was warning them that their plans were known.

Eager to save the peace process and his electoral chances, Peres is already trying to treat the latest attacks as a closed book. He has praised Arafat's measures against terrorism, announced that Israel is only "a quarter-hour before the peace," and forbidden General Amidror to testify at the U.S. Congress's hearings on terrorism last month. Peres feared an honest assessment by Amidror, who has been forthright in telling Knesset committees that Arafat has done next to nothing to combat terror.

(Continues on page 64)

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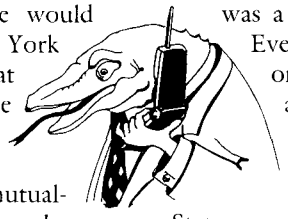
GEKKO

REGULAR readers may have noticed that I regard the bond market with a speculator's jaundiced eye rather than an investor's serious commitment. What else would you expect of a cynical New York cosmopolite? But it seems that solid Middle America takes the same view.



The Investment Company Institute, the lobby for the mutual-fund business, tracks flows into the various fund categories, and the latest numbers tell a sad story about the bond world. From October 1993, when mutual-fund assets first went over $2 trillion, to this February, when they topped $3 trillion, bond-fund assets dropped from $574 billion to $554 billion. In other words, small investors, the backbone of the market, decided that their ride on the yield curve was over. Their place was taken by foreign central banks and leveraged speculators.

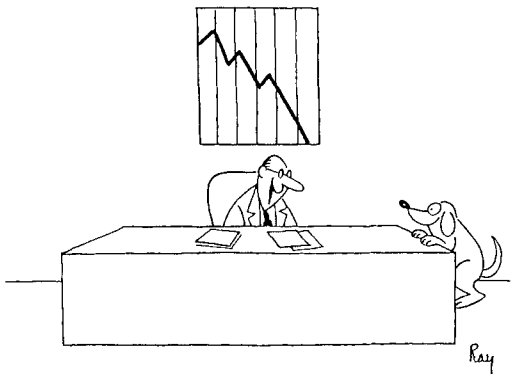
As I've said before, I think we'll get a rally in bonds, probably based on some weak economic numbers. But the fundamental shift has occurred—at the margin, people aren't looking on bonds as an investment.

■ If the stock market likes a sunny day in Silicon Valley, the bond market does best in chilly Presbyterian gloom. Canada, in other words. I like Canadian bonds—as long as you're simultaneously selling short their matching American issues. As I write this on the last day in March, the Canadian ten-year bond is trading at a yield of about 130 basis points, or 1.3 per cent, higher than the U.S. ten-year note. I think that with a bounce or two, this Canada risk premium will decline to 1 per cent or less in the next few months.

To begin with, the Canadian budget deficit is rapidly declining. In the fiscal year that just began, it should be down to 3 per cent or less, and in two years the Canadian federal government should be financing its remaining deficit out of the Canada Pension Plan (social-security) tax. I remember a conference on Canadian finance in Toronto a year and a half ago. Most of the attendees seemed to believe Canada was about to be shut out of the credit markets. It was a great buying opportunity. Even now, real interest rates on the ten-year in Canada are 6 per cent, which J. P. Morgan once said was enough to draw money from the moon. In the States, you earn a real 3.3 per cent before taxes.

Why are the Canadian markets doing you this favor? First, they worry about political risk. Having ignored the Quebec threat for too long, they now overestimate its near-term impact. The Quebec provincial government has to deal with its own budget deficit, which it says it's prepared to do. That means less political capital available over the next couple of years for separatism. Second, Canadians are worried about their dollar. But the prospective commodities boom, along with the improving fiscal numbers and a truly tough monetary policy, has kept the Canadian dollar in the range of 72 to 75 cents U.S., which is where the Bank of Canada wants it. Even a rate cut a couple of weeks back didn't do any real damage to the C-buck.

My guess is that a rally in the Canada bond spread will be triggered by a bear-market bounce in the U.S. bond. When it gets to 100 bp, sell the Canada bond, keep the U.S. bond short sale, and use your profits to buy some more gold.



"Rex! You have a plan? Good boy!"

■ I may think I know how to call turns in markets, but for true perspicacity, there's nothing like a head of state or his spouse. Hillary Clinton put all of us to shame with her ability to call commodities markets, and now, it seems, she is joined in the Investor's Hall of Fame by Nelson Mandela.

Sadly, as is so often the case, the divorce proceeding between Nelson and his wife, Winnie, was marked by a messy debate about property division.

It seems that in the six years since his release from prison, Nelson has been able to accumulate a fortune of some 40 million rand, or a little over $10 million. At least that's what Winnie claimed in her court papers.

Now it's possible that Mr. Mandela very carefully invested his share of the proceeds of the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize. Or he may have put aside more than the usual share of his salary. He did publish an autobiography, *The Long Walk to Freedom*, but African National Congress spokesmen have said that the royalties go to charity. And any savings or investment returns are subject to higher taxes than an American would face.

According to the court documents, Mr. Mandela has spent over a million dollars in gifts to Mrs. Mandela and her daughters since 1990, which means his remaining assets had to work that much harder. And with "Red" Bone, Mrs. Clinton's broker, forcibly retired from commodities trading, the kind of talent that's shown here is thin on the ground.

The South African press, however, is reluctant to pursue the matter. Thebe Investments, the company that does for the Mandelas what Whitewater was intended to do for the Clintons, will remain in the shadows.

■ Keep your eyes on the crack spread, the margin between what a refiner pays for oil and what he receives from the sale of products. There was a short-term pop in the price of gasoline last month that I believe is a prelude to a more significant runup this summer. Thanks to influences such as low gasoline stocks in the U.S. and possibly larger than expected refinery shutdowns in Europe, the price at the pump could get within shouting distance of $1.50 a gallon by summer, just before the elections. We don't have to tell people it's not Clinton's fault.

—JOHN DIZARD

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Liberalism and Terror

The chronic guilt that defines modern liberalism makes liberal politicians fundamentally unable to deal with terrorists.

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

FOR American liberals, Thomas Jefferson is the cultural hero *par excellence*, cherished for his positions on freedom of expression and on separation of Church and State and for his populistic rhetoric. (That this was a populism for whites only is a fact which American liberals have managed not to address.)

Of course Jefferson is a hero to many Americans apart from liberals, and his admirers include, as we now know, some white right-wing terrorists. On July 3, 1995, the *Washington Post* published Serge Kovaleski's profile of Terry Lynn Nichols, the second man charged in the Oklahoma City bombing. According to Kovaleski, Nichols read the works of Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine and was particularly inspired by Jefferson's maxim, "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants."

According to CNN News (January 31, 1996), the first suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing, Timothy McVeigh, was wearing a T-shirt carrying those same words at the time he was arrested while driving away from Oklahoma City. The CNN correspondent, Susan Candiotti, put a question about the T-shirt to McVeigh's lawyer, Stephen Jones. Jones replied: "Well, if Thomas Jefferson said it, I don't think it would be incriminating at all."

Jefferson did say it. He wrote those words in a letter to William Stevens Smith on November 13, 1787. Jefferson was writing from Paris, where he was Minister Plenipotentiary at the time, but the words do not imply any premonition of impending revolution in France. They are used in justification of Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts. In the letter to Smith, the words, "It is its natural manure," appear after "blood of patriots and tyrants."

Jefferson did not have the French Revolution in mind when he wrote those words. But as soon as that revolution began he wrote about it in the "tree of liberty" spirit, and set virtually no limits to the amount of blood the French Revolutionaries might legitimately shed in the cause of liberty—"Rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated." So Jefferson wrote in January 1793 after the news of the September massacres in Paris had reached America.

The concept of the bloodthirsty tree of liberty entered into the rhetoric of the French Revolution itself and specifically into the rhetoric of the Revolutionary Terror. The terrorist Bertrand Barère used a variant of it in the peroration of his speech calling for the execution of Louis XVI: "The tree of liberty, as an ancient author remarks, flourishes when it is watered with the blood of all varieties of tyrants." Macaulay, whose knowledge of classical literature was prodigious, did not believe in the existence of Barère's "ancient author": "In the course of our own small reading among the Greek and Latin writers, we have not happened to fall in with trees of liberty and watering-pots full of blood, nor can we, such is our ignorance of classical ambiguity, even imagine an Attic or Roman orator employing imagery of that sort" (*Edinburgh Review*, April 1844).

We know (as Macaulay probably did not) that Thomas Jefferson had "employed imagery of that sort" five years before Barère did and in the same city. Could the idea have reached Barère from Jefferson? Conceivably. Barère could not have known of Jefferson's letter of five years before to an American correspondent. But Jefferson had been in Paris for

Mr. O'Brien is the author of, most recently, The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution, 1785–1800, *to be published in the fall by the University of Chicago Press.*

ILLUSTRATION BY LUBA KOLOMYTSEVA

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the Fall of the Bastille, which was accompanied and followed by a number of bloody episodes. Jefferson's dispatches and letters of the period reflect a sober appreciation of the efficiency of mob violence in a revolutionary situation. "The decapitation of de Launay worked powerfully thro' the night on the whole aristocratical party [so that they realized] the absolute necessity that the king should give up everything to the States [General]." Some of Jefferson's acquaintances in Paris (who mostly belonged, like La Rochefoucauld and Condorcet, to the Enlightenment section of the nobility) may well have been shocked by the bloodshed, and have said so to Jefferson. If so, he could well have comforted them with some version of the thought about the tree of liberty and its natural manure. The story could then have gone the rounds and eventually reached the ears which were most likely to be attracted by the characteristics of that tree.

In any case, the bloodthirsty tree remains part of the revolutionary and terrorist traditions in the twentieth century. In "The Rose Tree"—the most "revolutionary" of the four poems W. B. Yeats wrote about the Easter Rising of 1916—the last stanza runs:

"But where can we draw water,"
Said Pearse to Connolly,
"When all the wells are parched away?
O plain as plain can be
There's nothing but our own red blood
Can make a right Rose Tree."

Yeats was probably not aware of the Jeffersonian origins of his metaphor. But I have heard the Jeffersonian passage about the tree correctly quoted, and properly attributed, by people who were interested in legitimizing the terror offensive of the Provisional IRA, which began in 1971, was suspended in 1994, and again resumed in February of this year.

LIBERALISM and terrorism appear as opposing concepts. But they have something in common. Both belong to the large and heterogeneous family of the devotees of freedom. Freedom is the most powerful and the most ambiguous of abstract ideas. There are two main divisions within the massive ambiguities. There is freedom combined with order and limited by law. This is the freedom of England's Glorious Revolution and of the American Constitution. This is the "manly, moral, regulated liberty" which Burke defended in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. This is the freedom of the mainstream liberal tradition in the English-speaking world. And it is also the freedom of the mainstream *conservative* tradition in the same world. In their philosophy of freedom, the common ground between the two traditions is more important than the differences. Edmund Burke belongs to both those traditions, and no one should seek to wrest him from one of them in order to monopolize him for the other.

Outside the zone of ordered freedom, now more or less coextensive with the Western world, the idea of freedom and the love of freedom take starker and more elemental forms. Freedom is thought of as the appurtenance and rightful heritage of a particular group of people defined by nationality, religion, language, ancestry, or territorial affiliation, and usually by some combination of several of these elements. Some other group or groups of people are felt to be denying freedom to us, who must have it. Freedom so understood is one of the most powerful of human motivating forces and the most destructive, impelling large numbers of people to risk their lives for it and to take the lives of others, the enemies of freedom. Serbs and Croats cut one another's throats, and all for freedom's sake.

When the Communist system collapsed in Europe, many Westerners were confident that freedom would take its place, and so it did. But in many parts of the former Soviet Union, the freedom that emerged was not freedom as understood in the West, but rather a conflict of freedoms: national and ethnic freedoms, at war with one another. Russians are making a brave effort to establish an ordered version of freedom, but that version is challenged by other versions.

Much of the world today breathes what Edmund Burke called "the wild *gas*" of liberty. Burke used that phrase about the French Revolution in the condition it was in in 1790, a year after the Fall of the Bastille, and two years before the advent of the Terror. The Whigs—the ancestors of modern liberals—believed that the French Revolution was over, having brought about the triumph of liberty. Burke was about to break with the Whigs, over that proposition. He wrote in *Reflections*:

"When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air is plainly broke loose; but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subdued, till the liquor is cleared and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing that they have really received one. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government, with public force, with the discipline and obedience of armies, with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue; with morality and religion; with the solidity of property; with peace and order; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too, and, without them, liberty is not a benefit in itself, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please. We ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may soon be turned into complaints."

I REFERRED just now to the contrast between "ordered liberty" in the West, and passionate versions of liberty in the world outside. The contrast is obvious, but it is not clear cut. Within the West also there are passionate absolutist libertarians claiming inspiration from within the Western tradition, as in the cases of the persons arrested for the Oklahoma City bombing. And Western liberals are ill-prepared to cope with terrorism. This is a question of psychology, not of formal liberal doctrine. In the British tradition that doctrine was formulated most authoritatively by John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty*. Mill wrote: "The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection." The doctrine of "self-protection" would seem to authorize democratic societies to take such measures

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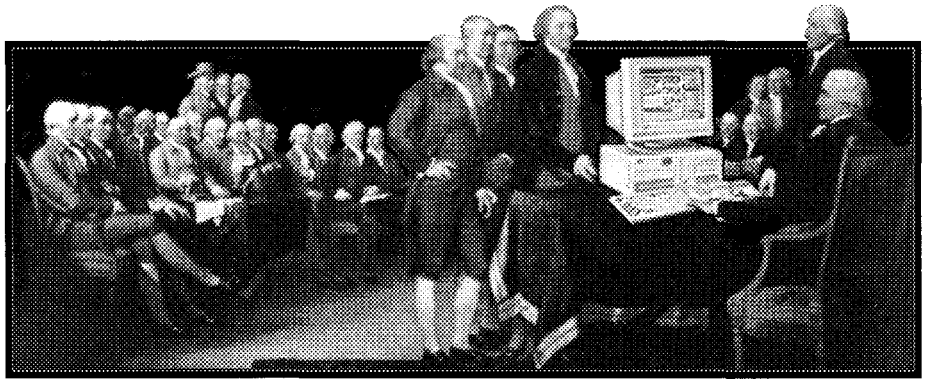
17 Conservative Groups,

American Conservative Union ★ Americans for a Balanced Budget ★ Americans for Tax Reform ★ Capital Research Center ★ Center for Individual Rights ★ Citizens Against Government Waste ★ The Claremont Institute ★ Empower America ★ Family Research Council ★ The Federalist Society ★ The Heritage Foundation ★ The Leadership Institute ★ The National Commission on Economic Growth and Tax Reform ★ Progress & Freedom Foundation ★ Savers & Investors League ★ Small Business Survival Committee ★ Young America's Foundation

4 Leading Publishers,

Eagle Publishing ★ Headway ★ National Review ★ The Washington Times National Weekly

1 Revolutionary Web Site.



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as may be necessary to defend the citizens against terrorist conspiracies, without defection from liberal principles. If the ordinary courts, and the ordinary criminal laws, are inadequate to protect the citizens from terrorism, then a liberal of the school of Mill could legislate, without a qualm of principle, for the introduction of internment without trial of persons whom the security authorities believe to be terrorists.

John Stuart Mill is the leading British liberal *thinker*. But a figure more representative of the British liberal tradition is the great liberal *politician*, William Ewart Gladstone. And Gladstone is the classic embodiment of the weakness of the English liberal mind in trying to cope with terrorism. Gladstone admitted that his whole attitude to Ireland was changed overnight by a single Irish terrorist act: the Fenian bombing of Clerkenwell Prison in 1867. That bomb convinced Gladstone that the Irish must be suffering from terrible grievances, which it was his duty to remove. "My mission is to pacify Ireland," he declared. He tried to do this by a series of reforms, beginning with the disestablishment of the Irish (Anglican) Church in 1870.

Gladstone's reaction to the 1867 Clerkenwell bomb taught Irish terrorists that terrorism works.

The Irish terrorists were not interested in matters like Church disestablishment. But they were very interested in the effect which their Clerkenwell bomb had had on the mind of the leading British politician of the day. What Gladstone's reaction to that bomb taught them was that terrorism *works*. And that lesson is the most enduring legacy of Gladstonian liberalism. "Violence is the only thing the British understand" is the favorite maxim of Irish Republicans even today. Canary Wharf in 1996 is heir to Clerkenwell in 1867.

At the level of logic, the liberal mind is in the grip of a fallacy: that terrorism can be rooted out by concessions and compromise, without any need to resort to inconvenient and painful emergency measures, like internment. This is a fallacy, because the terrorist mind is absolutist and unappeasable. Irish terrorists want to destroy Northern Ireland, and will not voluntarily stop anywhere short of that. Arab terrorists want to destroy Israel, and will not voluntarily stop anywhere short of that. Both sets of terrorists are interested in concessions and efforts at compromise only as evidence that the bombings are moving the enemy in the right direction, however slowly.

Compromises are possible, of course, but only with terrorists who are willing to become ex-terrorists, like Michael Collins in the 1920s or Arafat now. But terrorism survived the compromises. In the current case, Israel surrendered territory to Arafat, hoping to get peace in exchange. But unreconstructed terrorists, ignoring Arafat, have been able to use the territory surrendered as a base for attacks on Israel.

To seek to end terrorism by compromise is a fallacy in logic, because it misrepresents the nature of the phenomenon with which it attempts to cope. But beneath the fallacy lies a powerful emotional force: guilt (exceptionally strong in Gladstone, for example). British Gladstonian liberals—to be found today among both Tories and Labourites—feel chronically guilty about Britain's past treatment of Ireland. Israeli doves—the liberals of Israel—feel guilty about Israel's treatment of Palestinian Arabs. In both cases, there are some reasons for guilt. Unfortunately, feelings of guilt are of no help in the struggle against terrorism. On the contrary, they are a resource which the terrorist knows he can exploit, and he does so with a savage satisfaction.

In some cases, but not in all, there are political initiatives that could isolate the terrorists, and perhaps eventually lead to their defeat. For Israel, peace with Syria is the best available option: to give back the Golan Heights, in exchange for which Syria would eliminate terrorism in Lebanon and dry up the sources of supply for terrorists in the Territories.

In Northern Ireland, unfortunately, no promising political option is within reach. There are two sets of private armies there, a Protestant one and a Catholic one. Efforts to appease one—at present the Catholics—do not appease it, and they risk arousing the latent violence of the other one. Efforts to make the realities of Northern Ireland conform to a Gladstonian agenda are doomed to failure. The best hope for Northern Ireland would be a co-ordination of security measures between London and Dublin, including the introduction of internment—applied evenly to both sets of political-sectarian paramilitaries—on both sides of the border. (Which worked during the Second World War and in 1957–1962.) At present British and Irish versions of liberalism (combining in Ireland with nationalism) inhibit that response. I fear that the necessary measures will not be taken until things get much worse. The IRA promises another 25 years of "war."

IF THE terrorist threat increases in America, American liberals are likely to oppose any counter-measures which may be proposed against it. In doing so they will claim the sanction of Thomas Jefferson, whose protests against the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 are part of the charter of American liberalism. But I don't think American liberalism is strong enough, *in itself*, to inhibit counter-measures against terrorism. What might inhibit them is something different but cognate: the dislike among millions of Americans for the restraints and constraints of "ordered freedom" and a taste for the absolute stuff, straight out of the bottle: the version of the Jeffersonian tradition offered by McVeigh and Nichols. Most of the five million members of the National Rifle Association no doubt repudiate terrorist acts. But most of them would oppose any serious clampdown on terrorists who happened to be white, Christian, and conservative. So liberals protesting against an anti-terrorist clampdown would have some unaccustomed allies. If American terrorism ever acquires sustained momentum, it could be more dangerous than is today's terrorism in the Middle East and the British Isles.

Let me close with a pair of disquieting statistics. I have seen it estimated that there are between thirty and forty thousand armed men in the militia movement who regard themselves as either at war or on the verge of war with the Federal Government. The total active membership of the IRA is reckoned as between two and three thousand. □

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COOKING THE BOOKS

Wage Wars

The rich get richer and the poor get poorer—in the world according to the Congressional Budget Office.

JOHN H. HINDERAKER & SCOTT W. JOHNSON

THE proposition that income inequality is a problem, and a growing one, has become a staple of the Left. Assertions of a "widening gap between rich and poor Americans" and a "disappearing middle class" appear daily in the nation's newspapers. Statistics have been manipulated shamelessly to make this claim appear plausible. In particular, many commentators have argued that, since 1970, the percentage of American families in the "middle class"—defined as those with incomes between $15,000 and $50,000—has declined.

There is a kernel of truth in this contention. The percentage of families in the arbitrarily defined "middle class" did decline between 1970 and 1990, from about 63 per cent of all families to about 55 per cent. But this was because the middle class has become more prosperous: all of the net statistical "decline" of the middle class was caused by its members moving up into the next income category (over $50,000, in constant 1990 dollars). That category grew from 24 per cent of the population in 1970 to 32 per cent in 1990.

Moreover, data based on family income unfairly understate the growth of real income. Since the 1970s numerous social trends have reduced the number of adults in the average family. Some of these trends are benign—e.g., an increasing average age of marriage. But by far the most important trend reducing the size of families, and thereby depressing median and average family income, has been the high divorce rate, combined with the increase in the number of women who have children but who never marry. The impact of these trends on family income is obvious: If two people married to each other work, and if they each earn $50,000, they have one household with a $100,000 income. If they divorce, they are two households, each having a family income of $50,000—representing, in the economic statistics, a 50 per cent decline, even though the total amount earned is the same.

Thus, the fragmentation of the American family has significantly depressed statistics based on family incomes. A truer measure of economic trends, as opposed to social trends, is individual income. As Thomas Sowell and others have pointed out, real individual income—i.e., income per person in constant dollars—grew by about 40 per cent from 1969 to 1992, far outpacing average growth in family incomes.

The data reviewed above, which come from the Census Bureau, will be new, and perhaps surprising, to many readers. This is not because those data are hard to find. Nor is there any real doubt about their accuracy. But the facts about income dispersion have gone virtually unreported in the press. Instead, the media have collaborated with liberal politicians in publicizing alternative "data" that purport to show an alarming decline in the fortunes of middle-income Americans, and skyrocketing income growth in the top income group, particularly during the 1980s.

Virtually all of the "data" purporting to document these trends originated in the Congressional Budget Office. Throughout most of the 1980s and continuing until 1994, the CBO operated to support the political agenda of the party that controlled Congress.

Beginning in 1987, at the request of Democratic Sen. George Mitchell, the CBO produced "data" purporting to show two things: First, that the income of average families was actually declining; and second, that a majority of the economic gains during the Reagan boom went to the highest-income earners. These propositions were music to the ears of liberal politicians; Bill Clinton, for one, prominently featured both of the CBO's themes in his 1992 presidential campaign.

How could the CBO produce data so grotesquely at odds with the Census Bureau's numbers and other reliable

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THANKS.

Mr. Hinderaker and Mr. Johnson are attorneys in Minneapolis.

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NR West

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CONTENTS

House in Disorder	page 1
West World	page 2
Seamy City on a Hill	page 4
Urban Failure	page 6
West Coast Observer	page 8

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House in Disorder

MIKE ANTONUCCI

THE preliminary report is in from the accounting firm of Macias and Company on the California State Assembly's operations and finances over the last three years—coincidentally, Willie Brown's last three years as Speaker. This report shows a system in which there was a complete disregard for record keeping, oversight, and fundamental financial management of the Assembly's annual $75 million budget.

The word "budget" is in fact misleading. Each year, the Assembly submits a budget to the Governor for inclusion into state budget legislation. It is broken down into broad categories: members' salaries, mileage, expenses, operating expenses, and automotive expenses. But as Macias discovered, the Assembly did not have each department, committee, or leadership unit submit or approve a budget. Allocation of funds was at the whim of leadership.

Members were budgeted $211,000 each for their offices in 1994 and 1995. Many overspent this sum. But as the auditors noted, "it was unclear what happens if a member exceeds their budget." The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the Assembly Rules Committee—Bob Connelly under Willie Brown's speakership—produced fiscal reports for each member. But the procedure, Macias concluded, "results in an opportunity for data manipulation. . . . These conditions open the door for mistrust of the administration and can contribute to the paranoia regarding resource allocation currently held by many employees who we contacted during interviews." The report does not elaborate about this "paranoia," but seems to suggest that Speaker Brown's former underlings are fearful of being netted for improprieties now that he is gone.

THE auditors were charged to determine what Assembly staffers did for a living, in order to verify that their work was allowable under state law. This was not easy. "During the interview process, one of the individuals selected in our sample refused to provide us with information regarding their duties. This individual did answer all of the other questions we asked. This individual also did not provide the interviewer with a driver's license or another form of identification. . . . Another individual chosen for our sample refused to participate in the interview." Undaunted, Macias accountants inspected timesheets and attendance reports, but found that these "do not detail the actual functions performed by the employee."

Regarding the lack of budget procedures for Assembly offices, the auditors offered their most pointed criticism: "Without objective criteria with which to judge financial performance, there is little accountability to the people of California."

For the first time, the Macias report presents Californians with an accurate count of Assembly employees: 1,220, of which nearly 1,100 are full-time. There is no set limit to the number allowed for any given member or committee office. As for hiring these employees, the Assembly has no formal process to check criminal records. In fact, it has no requirement to interview past employers. The auditors point out the obvious problem: "Hiring individuals without verifying their qualifications and background can increase the likelihood that the Assembly could be the victim of a defalcation [embezzlement] scheme."

Once hired, there is no formal periodic review process to determine the level of employees' performance or even whether they "perform" at all. Some employees were paid more than their salary classification allowed. Seventeen received salaries more than 10 per cent above this level. Changes in employees' salaries were entirely controlled by the Speaker and the CAO.

Remarkably, Macias found that the Assembly's payroll oversight is so lax that it "can result in fictitious employ-

(Continues on page West-4)

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WEST WORLD

■ The White House has announced that between now and November President Clinton will leave California from time to time to visit Washington.

■ Apparently having missed the Vice President's report on "Reinventing Government," the Social Security Administration sent $79,424 to the recently executed "Freeway Killer," William Bonin, while he was living on California's Death Row. Now it has been announced that Bonin's family will be repaying this sum. There is reason to think, however, that Bonin took time to read the First Lady's recent bestseller. His last words on February 23 were to the effect that capital punishment is a bad influence on American youth. You see, it really does take an *entire* village to raise a child.

■ Earlier this year in Colorado Springs—home to a large number of evangelical Christian ministries—there was a concerted effort to place an amendment on the Colorado state ballot to strip many religious organizations of their tax-exempt status. Similarly, a lawsuit brought by Americans United for Separation of Church and State charges that Houston's Second Baptist Church violated its tax-exempt status by encouraging its members to vote and providing educational materials on the views of various candidates. Is there an ideological pattern here? The above churches are conservative, whereas no one has challenged the tax-exempt status of the Catholic Church, despite, for instance, recent lobbying operations in Sacramento by 25 church officials who oppose the California Civil Rights Initiative and support open borders. (Msgr. Jaime Soto, a Catholic spokesman, promises that these positions will be preached from California's Catholic pulpits in coming months.) Nor are black Protestant churches, which regularly provide forums for liberal office seekers, being challenged. Perhaps the above-mentioned watchdog group should rename itself to reflect its true purposes. Our suggestion: Americans United for Separation of Church and Welfare State.

■ President Clinton, obviously believing he has struck a chord in the American soul with his idea to save American education with school uniforms, is reported to be searching for a similarly innovative solution to America's drug crisis. So in March, he flew ten high-school students to Washington to advise him on a strategy. One of the students, asked about the irony of advising a former dope-smoking President about drugs, remarked: "As long as he wants to fix [drug use], that's fine. As long as he just doesn't decide all of a sudden one day it's OK." Sounds like she's not all that confident in him. Maybe she wonders why he needs to ask ten kids how to proceed. No word yet on what uniform the President chose for them.

■ Not only is Utah Congressman Enid Waldholtz not seeking re-election, but plans for a statewide chain of "Waldholtz Financial-Planning Centers" have been indefinitely postponed.

■ As we go to press, plans remain in place to kill five sea lions in the Ballard Sea Locks near Seattle, in order to keep them from feasting on steelhead trout and other fish critical to the local economy. Needless to say this is a last resort: officials have tried to run them off using firecrackers, nets, rubber arrows, chain saws, and tapes of killer whales, but to no avail. Last year $120,000 was spent building a pen for just one of them, named Hondo; now Hondo is back, 140 lbs. heavier and hungrier than ever. Officials are exasperated. Perhaps they should consult with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, recently quoted as having learned from a Hopi Indian that "all the plants and animals in the natural world are together a direct reflection of divinity." In any case, a lot more federal time, money, and energy have been given to saving these sea lions than was given to saving Randy Weaver's wife and son, who were shot and killed by U.S. marshals and an FBI sniper four years ago on Ruby Ridge in Idaho. Now five of the marshals involved at Ruby Ridge—whose role was criticized by the U.S. Senate—have received the highest Marshal's Service awards for valor there. Here Bruce Babbitt can offer no guidance. Old Age wisdom, not New Age babble, tells us it's wrong.

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■ We reviewed and praised only one film in these pages this year, and lo and behold it won the Academy Award for Best Picture. (See "*Braveheart* Redux," October 9, p. West-8.) Perhaps Michael Medved and others are correct that Hollywood is slowly adjusting to the middle-American concern for "family values." At the same time this illuminates one of the problems with the ongoing "dialogue" between entertainment moguls and the Clinton Administration over the so-called V-Chip. As our review pointed out, *Braveheart* is violent. But like older-fashioned violent movies, it distinguishes right from wrong, noble from ignoble, and yes, good violence from bad violence. There is something perverse about the idea that screen violence per se is the problem. As L. Brent Bozell has asked: "If the V-chip is supposed to program out violence, are we going to decide that John Wayne movies should not be viewed by children?" In fact, immorality, not violence, should be our target. Walt Disney Co. President Michael Ovitz remarked offhandedly last month at the White House: "If you look at TV right now, except for sexual innuendo and a few 10 P.M. shows, there are not a lot of ratings issues." Was he kidding? Except for sexual innuendo, or worse—and in almost every case involving unmarried people—there's not a lot of prime-time network TV. Sexual immorality may not be violent, but its consequences (abortion, disease, illegitimacy, child abuse, crime) are. This is what politicians should be telling Hollywood moguls. It may be easier and less controversial to harp on screen violence. But it misses the point.

■ Almost the same day Jesse Jackson announced plans to protest the Academy Awards over the shortage of black nominees, Spike Lee—the most highly acclaimed black filmmaker today—announced the subject of his next film: a busload of blacks traveling from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., in order to attend the Million Man March. Could there be a connection? Nor was Jackson the only Oscar party pooper. One Sonny Skyhawk, head of a group called American Indians in Film, was on the airwaves demanding the depiction of more Indians as doctors, lawyers, physicists, etc. He seemed unimpressed that the Oscar winner for best song of the year, "Colors of the Wind" from *Pocahontas*, professed that his song was inspired by "the Wisdom Keepers of Native America." If only Mr. Skyhawk would Keep his Wisdom to himself.

■ In California, Elvis sightings continue to outnumber Pete Wilson sightings 3 to 1.

■ News on the judicial front is mixed. The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals has found the Brady Law's requirement that local law-enforcement agencies perform background checks on handguns to be an unconstitutional unfunded mandate. This runs counter to a decision late last year in the more liberal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, and the issue will fall to the Supreme Court to decide. In Arizona, the U.S. Justice Department dropped its effort to force Coconino and Navajo counties to go from county-wide to district-wide elections of superior-court judges. This was meant to ensure the election of American Indians to the bench. As it turned out, though, no Indian had ever run for a superior-court seat in Coconino County. And in Navajo County, where Indians are a majority and could presumably elect one of their own if they saw fit, the Navajo Nation runs its own justice system in which most of the Indian residents participate. This federal meddling cost unnecessary time and tax money, but at least now it's over. On the other side, a federal court in Las Vegas found in favor of the U.S. Forest Service and the Clinton Administration, and against Nevada's Nye County, in a dispute over management of public lands. Presumably preferring intergalactic to federal control of its land, Nevada has designated State Route 375—a desolate road in the southern part of the state where many UFOs have been observed—the Extraterrestrial Highway. (Indeed, Nevada Governor Bob Miller reportedly suggested that the $3,360 worth of new signs be placed flat on the ground so aliens can land on them.) We recommend caution: dealing with the devil you know probably remains the best course for now. Meanwhile Nevadans can console themselves with the fact that some Americans look on their state as a libertarian Mecca. California Assembly Speaker Curt Pringle, for instance, facetiously proposed last month to station National Guard troops at the Nevada border to keep California businesses from fleeing.

■ Former California Senate candidate Mike Huffington says he will not seek any office in the state in 1998. Apparently he was scared away by Pete Wilson's threatened endorsement.

■ Bob Dole may not have new ideas, but Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona's Maricopa County is chock full of them. Actually they are mostly old ideas, but they're so sensible that they've made him the most popular figure in the state: his 76-per-cent favorable rating tops even that of Senator John McCain. Arpaio, of course, built the Estrella Jail in southwest Phoenix, which—consisting mostly of old Army tents—cost under $100,000 to build, as opposed to $100 million for a conventional prison. Arpaio vows never to turn away a prisoner arrested by the police, as many counties and states now do for lack of prison space: "I'll put tents from here to Mexico. There's lots of desert out there." He has also reintroduced chain gangs, discontinued hot lunches, coffee, and cigarettes, not to mention dying all the prisoners' underwear pink to prevent theft. Now he's planning to put the prisoners to work in county cemeteries, including burying the bodies of the indigent. He figures this will at once discourage recidivism and save the taxpayers $50,000. Arpaio has written an autobiography, just released, called *America's Toughest Sheriff*. That sounds about right.

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ANTONUCCI
(Continued from page West-1)

ees being established in the system, which can also result in payments to fictitious employees and an overstatement of the payroll expense."

WHAT about purchasing oversight? The auditors discovered that at times, the Assembly leadership allowed the entire bidding process for contract services to be conducted and completed by a single individual. "A single Assembly employee can request quotes, accept bids, receive the goods, and in essence approve the invoice," the report stated. Again, the obvious conclusion: "These responsibilities need to be segregated to strengthen internal accounting controls in an effort to reduce the risk of improprieties in the procurement process."

Macias examined only a very small sample of invoices, yet still uncovered one that had been approved by a person "whose signature could not be identified by Accounting Unit personnel." Other invoices did not specifically detail the purchase or service received. "This lack of internal control increases the risk that unauthorized purchases can be made and State resources misappropriated."

The auditors sampled five instances in which competitive bidding for contracted services was called for, and discovered that it was used in only one of these cases—despite the fact that state law requires competitive bidding and Assembly regulations require that at least three bids be obtained for purchases. Once again, auditors were hampered by missing documentation. They did discover that service orders and construction contracts were often prepared after the work had been completed and the invoice received. As a result, "The Assembly does not know whether their resources are being effectively and efficiently used. . . . In addition, there is a greater risk of misappropriation and defalcation."

The Assembly's internal structure did not spring into place by chance. As the Macias report notes, "The roots of the Assembly's internal accounting and administrative control environment are planted in a highly centralized management structure which places near-unlimited power at the discretion of the Speaker and the CAO." Since authority rested with these two officials, responsibility for the mess outlined by the auditors must lie there also. The lack of documentation is itself evidence of a policy to escape that responsibility.

Whether Willie Brown, Bob Connelly, and others involved in this financial and administrative fiasco will ever be called to account is unclear. More important in the long run is the response by current leaders. "The Assembly has been hopelessly mismanaged," says Assemblyman Brooks Firestone, who has been overseeing the audits. "Our primary aim is to see that it never happens again." □

Mr. Antonucci is managing editor of Inside California, *a monthly political newsletter.*

RAYMOND CHANDLER REVISITED

Seamy City on a Hill

MICHAEL ANTON

LITERARY elitists may be appalled to learn that the august Library of America—the Manhattan-based nonprofit publisher "dedicated to preserving the works of America's greatest writers . . . featuring authoritative texts"—has recently issued a two-volume set of the works of Raymond Chandler. That Chandler—the hyper-masculine hack famous for cranking out pulp fiction (before Quentin Tarantino lent the phrase the élan it now enjoys) and "hard-boiled" detective stories—should be deemed fit to join the ranks of Melville, Hawthorne, and the brothers James, well, it's enough to make the academic lit-crit crowd burst a collective blood vessel.

It's not just that Chandler is what the publishing world now terms a "genre novelist"—meaning a potentially good seller, but one with no literary value—or even that he is an outmoded realist, but that he is so . . . *insensitive* to contemporary pieties. Making a case that he is racist, sexist, and homophobic—the modern equivalent of violating all Ten Commandments at a stroke—would not be difficult for any hyper-sensitive PhD candidate willing to do the research. Especially that last one! *The Big Sleep* practically revolves around the business dealings of a deviant homosexual pornographer, and characters of questionable sexual tastes abound in the rest of his books (the most notable, perhaps, being Earl, Dr. Verringer's . . . whatever in *The Long Goodbye*), none of whom are what Chandler himself might have termed "on the level." These days, a much shorter catalog of offenses than can be compiled from Chandler's oeuvre would disqualify a writer from serious literary consideration, and even those whose reputations tower over Chandler's—e.g., Mark Twain—are not immune (see Jane Smiley's screed in the January *Harpers*).

What the disqualifiers will be missing in Chandler's case are 13 excellent short stories, 5 insightful, hilarious essays, a selection of his most interesting letters, 7 thoroughly enjoyable novels, and 2 overarching themes: the real Los Angeles in contrast to its mythic reputation, and the hero amidst a sea of corruption and an almost impenetrable web of lies.

As to the first, Chandler came to live in L.A. almost by accident. Returning to America in 1912 from England, where he had worked as a journalist, he met a Los Angeles attorney on the ship who later helped him get a job as a bookkeeper. Back then L.A. was a small town, and most of the surrounding region was a patchwork of orchards. But it grew quickly, due to the cheap land, great climate, and a barrage of promotion from the city fathers, who advertised the area to the cold, crowded East as a real-life paradise on the Pacific. And then there was the film industry, which relocated to L.A. from New York early in the century in search of better weather and open spaces. These two elements combined to create a myth of an

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idyllic city, a new kind of city where overcrowding would be unheard of, where the humblest laborer would own his own bungalow with two yards, where the sun would shine year round, and where the most glamorous industry in the country would be headquartered.

ENTER Raymond Chandler. From his early pulp stories through his later novels, his Los Angeles is a virtual sinkhole of depravity and corruption. He manages to take the natural setting of open spaces, gentle breezes, and sunshine, and the man-made setting of Mediterranean architecture and wide boulevards, and twist them into an environment of hellish duplicity and omnipresent crime. Just as the real L.A. probably never lived up to the mythic city of the ad men and the film industry, neither, one suspects, was it ever as depraved as Chandler's nightmare metropolis.

It is misleading, then, to call Chandler a realist in the sense that Dickens or Balzac or, more recently, Tom Wolfe are realists. His stories and novels are not "social reportage." Rather he uses a very real setting in a very detailed manner as the backdrop for a broader theme. He could have set his books anywhere. But Los Angeles must have seemed to Chandler the perfect backdrop for his purposes. Its inflated reputation made it ideal for his larger point about the corruption of American society at mid-century. That the new paradise could be capable of such depths of depravity, that the land of perpetual sunshine could have such dark inlets as his fictional Bay City and Idle Valley, that the reality of Hollywood, the image capital of America, could be so base—then, what must be going in the rest of the country?

Chandler's answer is set forth most clearly in *The Little Sister*, perhaps the darkest of his novels, and the one that focuses most closely on the inner workings of the film industry. The first several chapters of the book lead the reader to believe that while L.A. may be a new Sodom, things are better in the heartland, as represented by Orfamay Quest, the innocent medical receptionist from Manhattan, Kansas. Chandler's choice of home town for Miss Quest is no accident. For as Kansan as little Orfamay may seem at first glance, she turns out to have a lot more in common with people from that other Manhattan—Los Angeles's only serious competition as the American capital of crime, corruption, and depravity. There is no escape from the rottenness.

But to say that there is no escape is not to say that there is no alternative for those who live in it. Chandler's detective, Philip Marlowe, is the embodiment of the only viable path: harbor no illusions about the world around you, remain incorruptible no matter how difficult that may be, and watch your back. Marlowe's character is most exhaustively explored in *The Long Goodbye*, Chandler's longest (and some say best) book. His loyalty to a man he hardly knows, but whose company he has enjoyed over cocktails, gets him beaten by police, lands him in jail for ten days, and involves him in a byzantine web of deceit, treachery, and murder. He refuses beautiful women, who all but throw themselves at him, because they are married—some to abusive alcoholics, no less. And he lives on the brink of bankruptcy, never claiming for himself a ripple in the flow of money that engulfs his city and his clients. Chandler's letter of October 1949 to John Houseman explains Marlowe succinctly: "*Time* [has called] Philip Marlowe 'amoral.' This is pure nonsense. Assuming that his intelligence is as high as mine (it could hardly be higher), assuming his chances in life to promote his own interest are as numerous as they must be, why does he work for such a pittance? [T]he answer to that is the whole story . . . the struggle of all fundamentally honest men to make a decent living in a corrupt society. It is an impossible struggle; he can't win. . . . That does not alter the fact that Marlowe is a more honorable man than you or I." He may never win, that is, but neither, it would seem, does he lose.

One may question the accuracy of Chandler's dark portrait of American society. But, again, what is ultimately most compelling about his books is not realism in the strict sense. Rather it is the picture of depravity as such that he presents, and one man's heroic resistance to it, which that man accomplishes, almost miraculously, while remaining right smack in the middle of it all the while.

Chandler's stories and novels are exquisitely plotted, packed to the gills with dynamic characters, and overflowing with sharp, crackling dialogue. I defy anyone to read *Farewell, My Lovely* for the first time and not marvel at the maze Chandler leads the reader through, only to tie things together seamlessly and utterly unpredictably at the end. Or to read *The Lady in the Lake* and not be charmed by the disarming, not-so-dumb-as-he-would-like-to-seem Sheriff Patton. Or to read any of the books and not find yourself unaccountably quoting the witticism of Philip Marlowe long after you have put them back on the shelf. Failing to appreciate these, I would like to think, is possible only for an English professor. □

...YA KNOW, HONEY... WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER 60 YEARS NOW...
WE'VE RAISED TWO WONDERFUL CHILDREN...
WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL HOME, AND WE'RE STILL MADLY in LOVE...
WILL YOU MARRY ME?...

Mr. Anton is a PhD student in Government at the Claremont Graduate School.

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TRANSPORTATION PLANNERS *V.* PEOPLE

Urban Failure

RICHARD A. HENDERSON

"BUILD it, and they will come." Unfortunately for Los Angeles, this is more than a nifty twist to the motto of a baseball fantasy film. It was actually spoken by an embarrassed MTA official at the recent grand opening to the city's biggest light-rail boondoggle to date—the $1 billion Green Line, already nicknamed "The Green Line to Nowhere." The appropriateness of this cinematic allusion lay only in the fact that the Green Line's advocates must have been in a dream world when they designed it to slice across southern L.A. County.

The Green Line stands as an ominous warning to Orange County—whose own Transportation Authority is wending its way through a federal planning process that may lead to a $2 billion urban rail system—as well as Dallas and numerous other Western cities that seem to have been bit by the light-rail bug.

Aligned along the center of the Century Freeway, the 20-mile Green Line runs between Redondo Beach and Norwalk. The "to Nowhere" moniker is well deserved: Its western end is near—but due to political squabbling, not at—Los Angeles International Airport. Its eastern end is a non-destination point—that is, neither a regional population center nor an activity center. It's hardly a surprise, then, that the Green Line transports a pitiful 10,000 people a day—10 per cent of original projections.

Green Line's $1 billion price tag was three times the original estimates. How it came to be so spotlights the deceptive practices that have become the hallmark of urban rail promoters and their political allies: First, to get light rail approved and initially funded, promoters overestimated ridership projections, underestimated construction costs, and downplayed future operational costs. Then, after construction began and obligated funds ran out due to cost overruns, investments already sunk into the project became the justification for utilizing more tax money. In the end, the Line was completed a year behind schedule.

Adding to the system's cost in a relatively minor way were displays of art installed at each of its stations. One features a large statue of a bee, which ironically will stand for all time to remind taxpayers of how badly they were stung.

The Green Line's $21 million annual operating budget is also higher than it might have been. For instance, planned automation of the cars was scrapped in favor of drivers at the behest of public-employee unions. The current cost adds up to a taxpayer subsidy of over $7 per rider. (In general, operation subsidies over the life of an urban rail system run between 50 and 80 per cent.) Amortizing costs for right-of-way and construction, and rolling stock through the system's lifetime, raises the Green Line subsidy to over $20 per rider. Looked at in this way, it would be cheaper to have Green Line's 10,000 daily passengers call taxicabs.

So what does all this money buy? The critical test of any transportation system is how well it reduces traffic congestion. This is calculated in terms of "total travel-time savings," in units of hours per day. And here too, urban rail comes up short: bus transit and multi-lane highways, to name two alternatives, perform much better in travel-time savings—the latter by a factor of over three. Relatedly, urban rail systems do little to increase the percentage of people using public transit: the Reason Foundation studied the performance of Los Angeles's Blue Line, and found that the annual cost to the taxpayer of eliminating single-occupant vehicles with light rail is $38,000 per vehicle.

"We keep spending more than we take in—we have to stop living the American Dream."

AGAINST these charges, one Green Line supporter protested that ridership was hurt by downturns in local aerospace industries: the system was well thought out, in other words, but the economy let it down. Ironically, this excuse highlights the fatal flaw of urban rail systems—inflexibility to changes in demographics, population centers, commuter destination points, telecommuting, and growing numbers of home-based businesses. This flaw is even more deadly in the West, where cities tend to grow in a sprawling manner and are characterized by less density and more urban cores or "edge cities." Western metropolitan areas such as Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, Orange County, etc., lack the highly concentrated points of origin and destination that are critical to the success of light rail.

Rather than adjust their policies to the way people really live and provide transportation systems adaptable to changing travel patterns, government planners tend to look on urban rail as a social-engineering tool to transform cities into something more favorable to political and special-interest agendas. This is the key to understanding the twisted track toward urban rail (and red ink) down which Orange County and other Western cities seem to be heading at full steam—despite previous urban rail failures in Los Angeles, Portland, San Diego, Sacramento, et al.

Orange County's transportation leaders should pull the plug on their expensive studies and car pool up to L.A.'s Green Line to see for themselves how light rail works—or doesn't work. Likewise transportation planners from elsewhere. If they won't, taxpayers should see they are replaced. □

Mr. Henderson, a civil engineer and member of the Orange County Transportation Authority Citizens Advisory Committee, lives in Huntington Beach, California.

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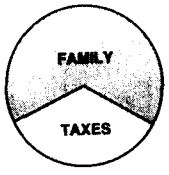
WHO HAD THE BETTER ESTATE PLAN?
ANDY WARHOL OR CONRAD HILTON?

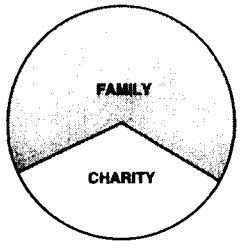
	Andy Warhol	Conrad Hilton
Gross Estate:	$297,909,396	$199,070,700
Total taxes and Costs:	$6,858,202	$105,782,217
Net Estate:	$291,051,194	$93,288,483

Most people would think that counter-cultural icon, Andy Warhol, would have been a bit flaky in his estate planning when compared to business tycoon Conrad Hilton. They would be wrong. Because Mr. Hilton failed to leave as much of his wealth to charitable bequests as did Mr. Warhol, the federal government simply took it when he died. Mr. Hilton paid over $100 million in federal estate taxes, while Mr. Warhol paid a little over $1 million on a much larger estate. How? Mr. Warhol left his property to further his charitable interests and was able to help better the causes in which he believed. Actually, with the addition of some simple charitable trust mechanisms, most of us could leave much more to our heirs *and* to our favorite charities. Simply by planning your charitable gifts, you can reduce your income tax or, in some cases, completely eliminate income tax, capital gains tax, estate tax, generation skipping taxes, and the gift tax. In any case, without a will, all of your property will be distributed by the state in the manner in which it deems important.

No Plan



A Good Plan



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No Father's Love

WELFARE as we know it hasn't ended yet, and probably won't anytime this year. The question that has politicians stumped is: What will take its place? A roundtable meeting in Los Angeles on March 18, sponsored by the Claremont Institute's Welfare Reform Taskforce, gathered forty scholars, officials, community leaders, and citizens to think about possible answers.

Eloise Anderson—former architect of Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson's highly regarded welfare reforms, now director of California's Department of Social Services and author of Governor Wilson's welfare-reform plan—referred to the current federal system as "government-sponsored child abuse." California is on the receiving end of too much of this abuse: Approximately a quarter of all federal welfare dollars comes to the Golden State. Nearly 3 million Californians are on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), up from 1.8 million in 1990, at an annual cost of more than $7 billion.

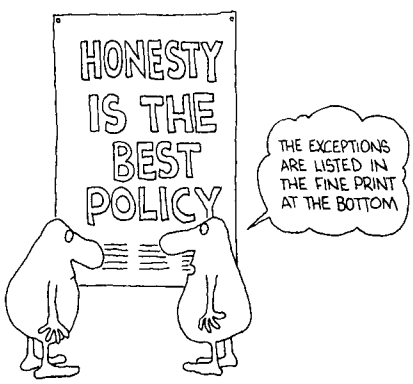
Wilson and Anderson hope and assume that AFDC will eventually be abolished and that Congress will redirect federal welfare funding into state block grants. (Congress, in fact, already passed such legislation, which President Clinton vetoed.) Under Anderson's proposals, then, state welfare payments would not exceed the minimum wage—thus removing the disincentive for recipients to work. (Anderson, a former welfare recipient herself, is particularly concerned here with single mothers: "If I have a woman who is not getting up to go to work, she is not getting her children up to go to school.") Recipients would receive a flat subsidy across the board, regardless of the number of children in the house—removing the incentive to bear illegitimate children. Two-parent families would get the same amount as single parents—removing the incentive to divorce. And Anderson would wean recipients off the dole after two years.

The Wilson–Anderson plan is not without its conservative detractors. One critic at the meeting was Robert Carleson, former Social Services chief under Governor Ronald Reagan, who said it would only replace one destructive bureaucracy with another. According to his view, only private welfare is legitimate.

The plan's defenders and critics alike appreciate the deep value of the "front line," private-sector work of roundtable participants Leon Watkins, director of the Los Angeles-based Neighborhood Help Line, Robert Woodson, president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, and others like them.

Watkins's "organization"—run out of his house in Compton with the help of one assistant—is struggling to restore the moral center to an area overrun with drugs, gangs, and despair. He doesn't get any state or federal money, and probably wouldn't take it if it were offered. But he has the respect of his community, something no government social worker can claim. "I've seen him talk a gun out of the hand of a gang member about to shoot another person," said Woodson. "That's the kind of respect they have for Brother Leon."

Once Watkins tacked up wanted posters around the neighborhood picturing the leader of the local Crips. After a few days, he arranged to meet this tough in a nearby alley. The latter arrived with two carloads of heavily armed homeboys and asked Watkins, alone and unarmed, what he wanted. "I want to talk to you about your life," Watkins replied. They talked for the next two hours. Two weeks later, Watkins had him in Bible study. A month after that, he had drawn in the other gang members as well.



WOODSON himself is as critical of the conservatives' timidity in the welfare-reform fight as he is of the liberals' faux compassion. And his message is unabashedly religious, which seemed to make some attendees uncomfortable. One woman asked Woodson if he was giving secular charitable institutions short shrift. "We should judge programs by their secular outcomes," Woodson answered. "We need to support whatever can best fix damaged and broken people." Including religion-based programs.

This theme was echoed by Thomas West, of the University of Dallas, who lamented the tendency of modern welfare programs to undermine morality. Recalling the poor houses of the 19th century, West said that "Bad behavior was not tolerated." People were supported in a minimal and temporary way—more like what Anderson proposes than the current system. "And there was an expectation of duty and responsibility."

Thirty years of the materialistic strategy of the Great Society—throwing money at the poor—has proved disastrous. But it has served vividly to remind us that healthy lives, like healthy nations, are built on morality. Those who still haven't come to see this—those who remain convinced that whatever imperfections persist in the current welfare system can be corrected by more programs—tend to be morally secluded in safe neighborhoods and blinded by their own sanctimoniousness, which they take for love.

The most passionate reformers are in fact those least secluded from the welfare underclass, and are animated by the insight that love is absent in the welfare state. Says Leon Watkins: "The red flag is up, and it is a big flag. The children are crying out. All they know is that they have a father, the government, that does not love them."

—BEN BOYCHUK

Mr. Boychuk is a Research Fellow at the Claremont Institute.

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sources of information? The following examples will show how far the CBO was willing to compromise itself for political purposes.

The Census Bureau keeps statistics separately for "families" and "unrelated individuals." Census Bureau figures show that between 1980 and 1989, real income for the middle quintile of families increased by 8.3 per cent, while real income for the middle quintile of unrelated individuals increased by 16.3 per cent. The CBO manipulated this Census Bureau data by combining "families" and "unrelated individuals" into the single category of "families." Since demographic trends produced more rapid growth in the number of unrelated individuals in the 1980s, and since families headed by two adults on average have far higher incomes than unrelated individuals, combining these groups into a single category of "families" greatly depressed average "family" incomes.

Thus, even though the incomes of middle-quintile families increased at a rate of 8.3 per cent and the incomes of middle-quintile individuals increased by 16.3 per cent, middle-quintile "families" in the CBO's new sense saw their total incomes decline by 0.8 per cent over the same period. The CBO thus performed the remarkable trick of combining two positives and getting a negative.

The CBO's data purporting to show an overwhelming share of the income growth that occurred during the 1980s as going to the top 1 per cent of income earners are also the product of statistical manipulation. First, the CBO, unlike the Census Bureau, included capital gains along with wages and salaries. Second, capital gains were not properly adjusted, skewing the apparent distribution of income in the direction of taxpayers who reported capital gains. Third, the CBO further exaggerated the effect of capital gains by limiting net capital losses to $3,000. Fourth, the CBO included partnership income but excluded partnership losses, and also excluded rental losses. Finally, the CBO completely ignored income mobility in its analysis.

The CBO published its "data" without fully disclosing its methods. It took two years of heroic detective work by Christopher Frenze, then a minority staff economist of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, to uncover the technical errors and deliberate distortions that underlay the CBO numbers.

When the CBO's methods were

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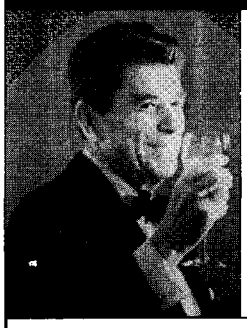

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revealed, it was unable to defend them. Instead, the CBO started by distancing itself from the estimates of enormous income gains by the top 1 per cent. Later it abandoned its most popular and defective family-income data, including measurements used to portray family incomes in a manner inconsistent with Census Bureau data.

But the CBO's express and tacit admissions that its statistics were misleading has not deterred the Left from continuing to rely on its faulty data. On the basis of CBO income data, for example, influential MIT economist Paul Krugman has asserted that the Reagan years make "a picture of simultaneous growth in wealth and poverty unprecedented in the twentieth century" and that the "growing gap between rich and poor was arguably the central fact about economic life in the 1980s." Astonishingly, in his book devoted to this and other related topics, Krugman saw no need to acknowledge, disclose, or account for the Census Bureau data summarized above. Krugman served as a Clinton campaign advisor in 1992.

WHEN the focus shifts from inequality of income to inequality of wealth, animus against "the rich" emerges even more clearly. The publication of a book by economist Edward Wolff, entitled *Top Heavy: A Study of the Increasing Inequality of Wealth in America*, is the latest sortie in this media assault.

Wolff's exclusive concern with the distribution of wealth obscures the more fundamental fact that the period from 1983 to 1989 was a time of unparalleled *creation* of wealth. Wolff acknowledges that during those years, the heart of the Reagan boom, American families added $4 trillion to their total net worth, so that families' average net worth grew by 20 per cent and median net worth grew by 8 per cent. The period from 1983 to 1989 saw a rapid acceleration in the pace at which wealth was created; mean marketable wealth grew at almost twice the rate at which it grew from 1962 to 1983.

Furthermore, as economist John Weicher has pointed out, there are some serious problems with Wolff's numbers. The most egregious example is that Wolff does not include either private pensions or the present value of Social Security benefits in his definition of "wealth." Even Wolff has acknowledged the extreme importance of this factor; by his own calculation, including the value of Social Security and pension benefits reduces the percentage of total wealth owned by the wealthiest 1 per cent of all families as of 1989 by nearly half—from 39 per cent to 21 per cent.

Second, even using the same definition of "wealth," Weicher's analysis finds that wealth may or may not have become less equally distributed between 1983 and 1989, depending on how various technical questions are resolved. At most, if any increase in inequality occurred, Weicher finds that it was so slight as to be "more or less on the margin of [statistical] significance."

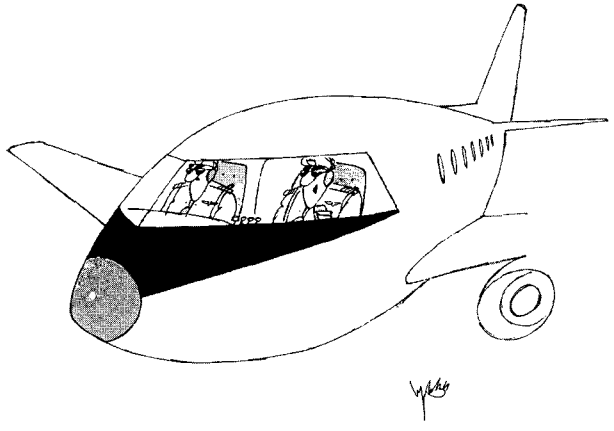
Third, Weicher gives considerable emphasis to the enormous creation of wealth during the 1980s, and the benefits that wealth creation conferred on American families. He points out that between 1983 and 1989 the net assets of the average household increased from $151,000 to $181,000 (in constant 1989 dollars). Average wealth grew by about 24 per cent for white households and 35 per cent for black households. And, whereas in 1983 the richest 1 per cent of U.S. households owned about 39 per cent of the "wealth" in the country, in 1989, they owned about 36 per cent. Again, these figures do not include such assets as private pensions and the present value of Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Finally, Weicher, unlike Wolff, has tried to address the question of economic mobility—in other words, were the top 1 per cent of "rich" families in 1983, who are said to have gotten a disproportionate share of the gains in wealth between that year and 1989, in fact the same people who were in the top 1 per cent in the latter year? Although this question could not be answered definitively because longitudinal data from the Federal Reserve survey have not been made public, Weicher tried to address the issue by referring to the self-descriptions given by the 1983 and 1989 groups on such matters as asset composition. Comparing the self-descriptions of the top 1983 group to the same information for the top 1989 group, Weicher found that there were very substantial differences. He concluded that "'the richest 1 per cent' don't seem to be the same people at the end of the boom as at the beginning, by and large."

BUT there are broader issues embedded in the economists' technical debates. To say that a relatively small number of families owns a substantial percentage of the country's wealth is another way of saying that, for whatever reason, most people are not saving much money. And there is some truth to this claim. But why is it that so many Americans do not save, and therefore do not accumulate much wealth? Part of the answer may be sheer imprudence. But we would propose two additional explanations.

First, taxes are too high. The Tax Foundation has calculated that the average American family now spends more on taxes than on food, clothing, and shelter combined. Small wonder that, for most families, there isn't much left to save. If our government seriously wants to expand the number of people who are able to accumulate wealth, it should cut their taxes. Wolff's proposed solution, however, to the "problem" of unequal distribution of wealth is—another tax!

We suspect that a second factor may also be at work, closely related to the first. A primary motive for saving has always been a desire to provide for one's old age. With the advent and steady expansion of Social Security and Medicare, that calculus has changed. The perceived need to save for old age has declined drastically, and at the same time, Social Security and Medicare taxes have made saving more difficult for every-



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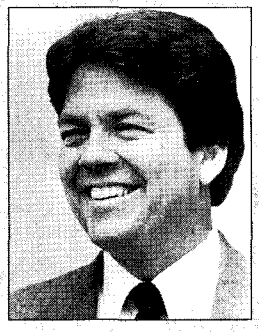

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one, and nearly impossible for some. The result is that many people save less and thereby accumulate less "wealth" than they would in the absence of these programs. In exchange, however, they have a right to receive Social Security and Medicare benefits, which, as suggested above, properly should be counted as part of their "wealth." Whether on balance this arrangement is desirable can of course be debated. But it hardly makes sense to raise taxes to a level which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for most families to accumulate wealth; then complain that most wealth is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of families; and finally propose to raise taxes again to "solve" the problem of unequal distribution of wealth.

WE MAY reasonably ask: Why now? Why, when by historical standards both income and wealth are broadly distributed, and when economic mobility has never been greater, has income inequality assumed a central role in our public discourse? The answer, we believe, has more to do with politics than economics.

In its current form, the debate over income inequality arose out of the debate about Ronald Reagan and his Administration. By the late 1980s Reagan's critics faced an intractable problem: By any conventional yardstick, the American economy had performed extraordinarily well during his term in office. Gross domestic product increased by one-third, inflation was brought under control, and unemployment fell. The Reagan Administration oversaw the longest peacetime expansion in American history. The extent to which Reagan's policies deserve credit for these trends is of course a legitimate subject of debate, but sustained economic growth, declining unemployment, and a stunning victory over rampant inflation gave his critics very little to work with.

Hence income inequality. In the late 1980s, a virtual cottage industry sprang up for the production of statistics designed to make the economic growth of the 1980s look bad. These statistics were based not on the familiar concepts of median income, unemployment, and inflation, but focused rather on such previously obscure categories as income quintiles and the Gini inequality index. The 1980s are now receding into history, but the income-inequality debate rages on.

The liberal appetite for "inequalities" to remedy has become insatiable. Redistribution of income, which was not recognized by the founders of this country as a legitimate object of government, has now become its chief purpose. The traditional functions of government have dwindled into relative insignificance. National defense now accounts for only about 17 per cent of total federal spending. And an American Bar Association study concluded that the entire apparatus of the civil and criminal justice system consumes less than 3 per cent of public spending. These traditional functions of government are dwarfed by its principal contemporary purpose: taking money from one person in the form of taxes and giving it to someone else. To sustain this vast structure of redistribution, liberals must always claim, as they are doing now, with increasing hysteria, that inequality is growing and "income gaps" are expanding. If the public were ever to realize fully the hollowness of these claims, the entire redistributionist enterprise would collapse. □

Pitching Socialism

Government-financed stadiums invariably enrich owners at public expense.

RAYMOND J. KEATING

AS a federal prosecutor and now mayor of New York, Rudy Giuliani has taken on Wall Street, the Mob, even a number of powerful city unions. But when it's time to talk baseball with George "The Boss" Steinbrenner, Giuliani goes weak in the knees.

That's because Steinbrenner is threatening to move the Bronx Bombers to New Jersey unless he gets a new, taxpayer-financed stadium. In a city that has already endured the traumatic departure of the Dodgers and Giants for the West Coast, this bit of brinkmanship is taken quite seriously. The mayor's office, in fact, has suggested the city might be willing to shell out as much as $1 billion for some choice real estate and a new stadium.

The New York Mets like the sound of this action. They are suggesting that a mere $100 million, to help fund a new stadium with a retractable dome, would keep them from moving out to the Long Island suburbs.

While no other city—or state, for that matter—has even considered forking over $1.1 billion to subsidize multi-millionaire owners and athletes, stadium socialism is a serious problem across the nation. Maryland taxpayers, for example, are being socked for almost $300 million—some of the money to partly finance a new stadium for the Washington Redskins, and some to fully finance a new stadium for the former Cleveland Browns.

The public in general does not support such plans, despite the popularity of professional sports. A national poll conducted by Media Research & Communications recently found that 80 per cent of Americans oppose the use of their tax dollars for sports stadiums and arenas.

The politicians, however, mesmerized by the glamour of pro sports and the prospect of increased revenue, seem determined to have their way. Very rarely do elected officials schedule referenda on government financing and ownership of sports facilities. And in some instances, when they have done so and the votes have not gone their way, they have changed the rules in mid game. Last September, Seattle voters turned down a proposal that would have hiked taxes to pay for a new stadium for the Mariners and for repairs to the Kingdome, home of the Seahawks. A month later, state and local officials ignored the vote and approved a $320-million plan for the Mariners' park.

The economic justification for government-financed sports facilities has always been based more on spin than on

Mr. Keating is chief economist for the Small Business Survival Committee and co-author of D.C. by the Numbers: A State of Failure.

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Reagan Legacy in Jeopardy.

Government to Kill Free TV?

By Alfred C. Sikes

With the ink on the Telecommunications Reform Act barely dry, Congress has begun to consider a truly ill-advised action that would imperil the competitive balance in the broadcast industry and undermine some of the positive effects of the landmark legislation just enacted into law.

Hearings are being held on a proposal to immediately auction off the portion of the nation's airwaves designated for the transition to advanced television, a step that, if taken, could result in the demise of free television in our nation. If Congress ultimately requires such an auction, it will prevent broadcasters from making an orderly transition from the current system of analog television to advanced, digital television. Should this occur, free television will eventually become obsolete and instead of having the option of buying television services, viewers will be forced to pay cable, or telephone, or satellite companies for the privilege of viewing state-of-the-art TV.

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Allowing broadcasters the opportunity to better serve the public by remaining technologically competitive was the goal of a process initiated in the Reagan Administration as it became clear that the industry was on the verge of seismic changes in technology and quality. As part of that process in 1991, and with broad bipartisan support from Congress and the Bush Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, which I then chaired, developed a specific plan to allow broadcasters to transition from the analog to the digital world.

To make an orderly transition possible, we decided to temporarily provide broadcasters the spectrum needed to simultaneously air programming in both analog and digital formats so the public would not face a sudden loss of television service. After the transition period was completed, the broadcasters were to return the original spectrum to the government for auction. If broadcasters are forced to immediately transmit digital signals without a transition period, every TV in America would go dark. Using today's market as a measuring stick, if every TV was then replaced with a new digital set or a converter to translate the digital signal into an analog one, the public overnight would receive a bill for tens of billions of dollars at a minimum.

The existing transition process has proceeded, and succeeded, for nearly a decade. Relying on the assurances of spectrum availability for a transition period, the TV industry responded with the massive allocation of resources needed to bring digital television to life. Since 1985, hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent by business on research and development, plant and equipment, human resources and testing facilities. Unlike Japan, where the government spent billions of yen to initiate what is now an obsolete high-definition TV system, the U.S. government has not spent a nickel.

Not content to leave well enough alone, some in Congress are now challenging the decade-old promises and resulting process as a giveaway of valuable spectrum. In the never-ending search for new Federal revenues to reduce their need to cut spending, they are promoting the idea of an immediate auction of the portion of spectrum that has been temporarily reserved for the transition to digital television.

The impulse is understandable, the policy wrong-headed. Not only should the government keep its promises, but it should also seek an orderly and quick transition from a spectrum-hungry analog transmission system to an efficient, digital one. Talk about a win-win. The public gets much better television services and, in not too many years, a much more valuable block of spectrum to auction. While it isn't possible to put a price on what might be paid today for the patchwork of spectrum now reserved for loan to broadcasters, it is clear that the contiguous block of spectrum to be reclaimed in the future would be much more valuable.

But by far the worst consequence of an immediate auction would be to throw the broadcast industry on the junk pile. In a wide-open auction, broadcasters would face a harsh economic reality. The phone companies and other providers could use the spectrum for immediate returns and the broadcasters couldn't. The broadcasters' first requirement will be to build a new transmission plant alongside its current one and broadcast the exact same programming, but in digital code. While in time broadcasters will be able to develop new digital services that will not interfere with their first requirement, TV, those new services and associated revenues will not come quickly. And, failing to win the auction, broadcasters would find themselves figuratively tethered to an analog signal that will look increasingly antiquated. In a high-tech world, low tech loses.

At its end, the current process will leave broadcasters no more spectrum than they now have. In fact, advances in digital compression will lead to more efficient spectrum utilization. For that reason, those who see a giveaway to broadcasters have got the issue exactly backwards. Altering the plan in favor of an immediate auction would actually be a taking of the broadcasters' right to exist. How ironic it is that as the government seeks to dismantle barriers that have prevented cable television and telephone companies from operating in new communications arenas, auctions would be used to erect a barrier that would bar broadcasters from providing the free services they have delivered for decades. Government policy should not undermine free broadcasting in favor of pay services offered by cable, phone and satellite companies.

There is much to be lost, and nothing to be gained, by abandoning the orderly process we created a decade ago. Congress should resist the calls to change the rules in the middle of this game. If it doesn't, the American people will, quite literally, pay the price.

Alfred C. Sikes, President of Hearst New Media & Technology, was Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission from 1989-93.

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substance. First, the team or elected officials will hire a consulting firm to produce studies predicting substantial economic benefits from a new stadium or arena. These studies rely on the Keynesian notion of an "economic multiplier"—the justification for every government "stimulus project" in the past half-century. The calculation works by taking the dollars "invested" in building a facility, adds an estimate of money to be spent by spectators at each event, and multiplies the results by an additional number to arrive at an estimate of increased economic activity.

The problem is that the multiplier effect is all but impossible to measure accurately. Judgments about the catalytic effects of dollars moving through the economy amount to nothing more than statistical guesswork (a dirty little secret of the economics profession). Indeed, it is doubtful that any real multiplier effect occurs at all, because of something called the "substitution effect."

Simply put, the substitution effect holds that leisure dollars—that fairly limited amount of income that a family will devote to entertainment—will be spent one way or another. If there is no ballpark for a family to go to, then it will spend those dollars on some other activity, like a movie or a concert. Government-funded stadiums, then, turn out at best to be zero-sum games—a simple shifting of limited resources.

This larger economic picture, however, is usually lost on politicians bedazzled by the bustling markets for red hots and frozen yoghurt in places like Camden Yards and Jacobs Field.

The politicians are also oblivious to the negative effects of the higher taxes needed to pay for these facilities—like rising private-sector costs and diminished incentives for working, investing, and risk-taking. Government ventures usually wind up being net economic losses in the long run.

The Toronto Skydome, opened in 1989, is a prime example. A recent report from the Pioneer Institute notes that as the Skydome was constructed, cost overruns boosted the Ontario taxpayers' portion of the total bill from $120 million to $322 million. The government's share in the Skydome was eventually privatized in 1992 for $120 million—a considerable loss.

A spate of books, as well as independent studies from groups like the Heartland and Pioneer Institutes and the Brookings Institution, have expressed skepticism about economic growth owing to taxpayer-funded sports facilities. The most recent study, a 1994 Heartland Institute analysis conducted by economist Robert Baade, concluded that "professional sports is not statisti-

Uh-Oh, It's Magic

AFTER Earvin "Magic" Johnson's much-celebrated return from his HIV-imposed retirement, the Los Angeles Lakers' owner, Jerry Buss, wistfully noted that he felt "the same as Louis Armstrong did when he sang 'Hello Dolly' for the first time: 'It's so nice to have you back where you belong.' " Buss has good reason to croon. The Lakers, once the Western Conference's lone superpower, haven't won a championship since 1988. This year, prior to Magic Johnson's return, they managed to sell out their arena only once all season. The Magical second coming has already resurrected ticket sales, and has made the Lakers formidable once again. The league is equally elated. Johnson and his rival, Larry Bird, saved the NBA from terminal unpopularity in 1979, and officials are hoping for a repeat performance. Commissioner David Stern telephoned Magic after his first game back. "I wanted him to know how happy I am he's back playing," he gloated. "I just told him to watch his hamstrings."

But Magic's hamstrings should be the least of the NBA's worries. Does a player who is HIV-positive pose a threat to other players? The answer is: Yes, a threat that will probably never materialize, but which will be fatal if it does.

The NBA has done all it can to disparage such concerns. Dr. Michael Johnson, who heads the Players' Association's health-education program, assures skeptics that the chances of contracting HIV during the course of a game are "infinitesimal," and Magic's supporters frequently cite Centers for Disease Control statistics that place the risk of infection through "incidental contact" at one in 85 million. The problem is that contact in professional basketball is far from incidental. Competitors frequently collide, crash, and claw one another while fighting for rebounds, often drawing blood.

Dr. Johnson is nonchalant about these hazards: "I liken this situation to health-care workers," he says. "Years ago, a lot of doctors and nurses didn't want to take care of persons with HIV. Now you seldom hear about that." But taking such risks is an integral part of a doctor's job; and even then, few physicians would be willing to treat AIDS patients without sterilized equipment and rubber gloves. Risking AIDS is not an integral part of basketball, and such protections are unavailable to the players. So why take the risk?

This is what convinced Johnson to abort an earlier comeback effort in 1992, when several players, most notably Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz, expressed their fears. Malone pointed to the scars and scabs that dotted his arms, and said, "They can't tell me you're not at risk. And you can't tell me there's one guy in the NBA who hasn't thought about it." Today, the players seem surprisingly receptive to the idea of putting their lives at risk. Only a handful have questioned the wisdom of Johnson's comeback.

This shift in sentiment is due to an intensive league-sponsored effort at re-education—sensitivity training for jocks. As Dr. Johnson explains, the players are currently "better informed" (meaning less fearful of infection) "than they were back in 1991 when we started working with [them]." But there is an uncanny unanimity about the players' pronouncements. When asked if he was uneasy about playing against someone with HIV, Chicago Bulls Steve Kerr replied, "We're not going to be on the court having unprotected sex with Magic." Golden State Warriors Ron Seikaly echoed, "We're not going to have unprotected sex on the basketball court." And Phoenix Suns Charles Barkley chimed, "It's not like we're going to have unprotected sex with Magic on the floor."

Mr. Weinkopf is an editorial associate at NR.

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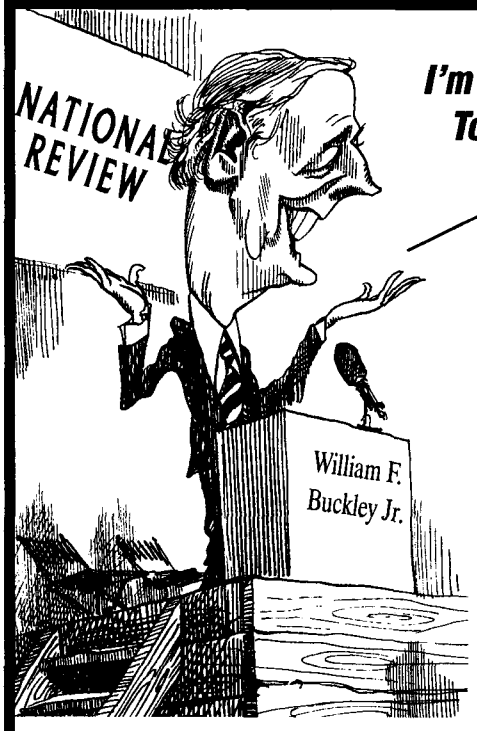

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cally significant in determining economic growth rates." There is "no support for the notion that there is an economic rationale for public subsidies to sports teams and stadium and arena construction." Sports teams and their facilities are largely byproducts, not sources, of economic growth.

Two other negative effects of government-owned sports facilities have become painfully obvious. First, because teams rent rather than own their stadiums, they are turning into transients, tearing up community roots (witness the Cleveland Browns) in a dash for new taxpayer-financed stadiums, relocation payments worth tens of millions, and even taxpayer-guaranteed profits (as in the deal that enticed the Los Angeles Rams to move to St. Louis).

Second, team owners and players, insulated by taxpayers from the cost of stadium financing, are doing extremely well without having to exert themselves to meet the demands of their market. Fans know intuitively that something is wrong when mediocre ballplayers sign multi-million-dollar deals, or ticket prices remain the same when the team is forty games out of the playoffs.

Despite general public disapproval and a lack of supporting economic arguments, even a number of conservatives have pushed for government financing of sports facilities. Leading welfare reformer Gov. Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin has kept the Milwaukee Brewers on the dole, lobbying hard for a new taxpayer-financed ballpark. And Massachusetts Governor William Weld's support for a government-financed stadium/convention center in Boston calls into question his self-proclaimed supply-sider status. Even George Will has gone native. In the January 22 *Newsweek*, he wrote favorably of the state-built home of the Baltimore Orioles.

While real conservatives have to love the tradition of the ballpark—the game, the hot dogs, the chatter—sentiment shouldn't dim our rationality. Markets work. If new stadiums and arenas have economic value, individuals acting in the marketplace will see that such facilities are built without any government intervention. San Francisco voters, in fact, have held fast. They have voted down taxpayer-funded stadiums on four separate occasions, and now the Giants are privately financing a new ballpark. Rudy Giuliani and his counterparts across the nation should take note, and stand up to Boss Steinbrenner and the other owners. When it comes to corporate welfare, just say no. □

Magic explains: The players "have educated themselves. When you educate yourself, you don't have to think all those crazy thoughts"—like, you might catch AIDS. Karl Malone, who opposed Magic's first comeback, now concurs. "I have no problem playing against him, absolutely not. We're more knowledgeable now." But education is not quite the same thing as parroting identical platitudes. That sounds more like indoctrination in the "correct" beliefs, backed up by ostracism. Those who challenge the league's AIDS orthodoxy invite stigmatization as "ignorant." As Armon Gilliam of the New Jersey Nets notes, "The swell of media support has really gotten behind Magic getting back, so a lot of players don't want to be unpopular and make a strong statement against it." Charles Smith, San Antonio Spur and union vice president, warns that any member who criticizes Magic's decision "would be condemned to no end" in the realm of public opinion.

For this reason, few of those who are apprehensive dare to express their anxieties to the press. Newspaper columns generally have to attribute negative statements to anonymous sources. Philadelphia 76er Vernon Maxwell—who complained to the *Los Angeles Times* that "You get scratched on your hand and then he might get an open wound. I don't want to be there with that. I have a wife and kids"—must now regret his candor. *Time* described him as "trouble-making" and one of "a few holdouts on the side of ignorance." And Magic, blissfully unaware of the irony, riposted that Maxwell "has never cared about anyone but himself."

Similarly, New York Knick Derek Harper, who wondered out loud how players would react if Magic cut himself, has since been reduced to silence. The mere suspicion of Magic-skepticism can be damning. So when a New York writer reported that Steve Smith of the Miami Heat was uncomfortable about guarding an HIV-positive counterpart, Smith rushed to defend his name. "I never said anything about Magic," he insisted, adding, "I'm taking a lot of flak." Laker trainer Gary Vitti even risked exposure to contaminated blood during Magic's first revival in 1992—treating an open wound with bare hands—to avoid charges of hypocrisy. "If I had put the gloves on," he remonstrated, "that would have been a mixed message. The other players would have said, 'Hey, Gary, if I can't get it how come you're using gloves?' "

The NBA has since instituted some safeguards: it now requires trainers to wear latex gloves when treating open wounds, and mandates that cut players take to the bench until the bleeding has stopped and the lesion has been properly bandaged. But such precautions still leave room for danger; the best way to protect against infection would be to bar those with HIV from the game. Stern balks at the suggestion: "This is not Salem. This is the United States. This is the NBA." And, "We can't have quarantine searches and then throw those who test positive out of the league." But this is exactly what the NBA does with its drug-testing program, and HIV carriers are certainly more likely to imperil their teammates than are drug users. Still, Stern argues that singling out HIV-positive players would be "unfair" and "un-American."

Image and marketing, not the health and safety of its players, drive NBA policy. It is doubtful that the league would have gone to such lengths if the player in question were less talented, or less popular. Likewise, it is hard to imagine the media working themselves into a comparable fit of adulation if Magic suffered from a less fashionable affliction—hepatitis, say, or gonorrhea. But the combination of AIDS's politically sensitive nature and Magic's charm has yielded an odd public reaction. The press and the NBA lionize Johnson for being twice irresponsible—first in contracting the disease and then in endangering his colleagues—and they chastise the protestors for doing precisely what he failed to do: being mindful of their health.

But what will happen to this unusual alliance of corporate greed and political correctness when Johnson sustains his first laceration? Brian Williams, a Magic-supporting player for the Los Angeles Clippers, sums up the league's attitude nicely: "I don't see a problem" with Johnson's return, he says, "but when Magic gets cut, it will be like turning on the lights with a kitchen full of roaches." —Chris Weinkopf

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Alien Nation: Round 2

The debate on immigration is hampered by the fact that immigration enthusiasts don't want it to take place.

PETER BRIMELOW

He does not seem to know what an argument is. He never uses arguments himself. He never troubles himself to answer the arguments of an opponent. . . . It has never occurred to him . . . that when an objection is raised, it ought to be met with something more convincing than "scoundrel" or "blockhead."

—LORD MACAULAY
"Essay on Southey's Colloquies"

ALIEN NATION was published in April 1995 and was, somewhat to my surprise, immediately and almost universally reviewed. I also found myself defending the book on a multitude of television and radio shows, so that by the fall I was—rather alarmingly—being recognized on the streets of New York.

(Actually, I received only one death threat, on my voicemail at *Forbes*. The caller was apparently incensed by my deriding, both the *New York Times*'s A. M. Rosenthal and Ira Glasser of the American Civil Liberties Union for their obsession with *Alien Nation*'s single reference to the blue eyes and blond hair of my son, Alexander. This scandalous revelation was probably the most cited passage in the book.

(And not once, as far as I have seen, was it cited in its context: the paradoxical and destructive effect of the interaction between non-white immigration and affirmative-action quotas upon native-born Americans who are not members of the "protected classes.")

"We at AEI [American Enterprise Institute]," Judge Robert Bork told me with mock ceremony during Norman Podhoretz's retirement dinner in May, "are very grateful to you for drawing fire away from Charles Murray"—co-author of *The Bell Curve*.

In fact, the first (and in the publishing business most important) reviews, in the *New York Times* (twice), the *Washington Post*, and *The Atlantic*, were serious, respectful, and sometimes—notably the one by the *Times*'s Richard Bernstein—strikingly generous. After that, as Wellington said at Waterloo, it was hard pounding—the only question being who could pound hardest.

"Hateful, racist," "gentrified racism," "openly racialist," "narrow-minded," "deliberately misleading," "an ugly jeremiad," "tirade," "diatribe," "a fervent and obsessive polemic," "breathtaking disingenuousness," "inflammatory," "incendiary," "Conspicuous bad faith," "utterly wrong," "beyond the pale," "bigoted," "intellectualized white rage . . . in-your-face vileness." Etc., etc., etc. I was blamed for the Oklahoma City bombing (by Ramon Mestre in the *Miami Herald*) and compared to Hitler and Germany's neo-Nazi skinheads (by Jeff Turrentine in the *Dallas Morning News*). My favorite hostile review: probably

Adapted from the afterword to the paperback edition of Peter Brimelow's Alien Nation: Common Sense about America's Immigration Disaster, *to be published by HarperCollins later this month.*

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Lawrence Chua's in the *Village Voice*—"His fear is justified. We will bury him."

Naturally, I found these reactions encouraging. After all, the same incredulous rage has greeted the conservative movement at each successive stage of its three-decade-long march through U.S. institutions, since the nomination of Barry Goldwater in 1964.

I also had a simple test that I applied to every review: *Did it discuss the 1965 Immigration Act?* Or did it instead just burble on about the glories of immigration in principle, missing *Alien Nation*'s key point: that the operations of the 1965 Act in practice have resulted in an influx far larger, less skilled, and far more dominated by a few Third World sources than anything envisioned at the time. In other words, even if you want a million immigrants a year—and the American people overwhelmingly does not—why this particular million?

A shamefully large number of reviews flunked this test. For the purposes of America's current immigration debate, they were just not in the game. Unsurprisingly, Mestre, Turrentine, and Chua all got a big fat F. Other prominent examples: Reid Ueda, *Wall Street Journal*; Stuart Anderson, *Washington Times*; Linda Chavez, *USA Today*; Clarence Wood, *Chicago Tribune*; Peter Skerry, *Commentary* . . .

Even more encouraging: throughout the print-media barrage I was spending hours a day on television and talk radio all around the country. And there it was not at all unusual to get 100 per cent supportive calls—from real Americans. The only exception was National Public Radio, and even there, the calls were usually fifty–fifty.

Indeed, as a print journalist I am appalled to say that my experience has left me gloomily convinced that electronic media, particularly talk radio, really do now carry the brunt of American public discourse. This is not just because a lot of talk-show hosts—Gordon Liddy, Oliver North, David Brudnoy, and many others, thanks to them all—were totally supportive in a way that no self-respecting print journalist seems able to be. Even my critics were generally polite and reasonable. When an angry caller complained to Larry Mantle, a liberal host on Los Angeles KPCC-FM, that I was being allowed to spread my noxious propaganda without anyone to oppose me, Mantle reprovingly said no one ever objected when he had liberals on alone.

On live radio furthermore, I could compel questioners to address the central question: Why do you want to transform America? Quite often they were honest or naïve enough to answer—as did Larry Josephson on his "Bridges" NPR show—that America in 1965 was just too homogeneous ("white bread") for their taste. Then I could move in for the kill: "That's great! Now let's ask the American people if they agree."

In addition, events moved *Alien Nation*'s way. Democratic former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan's Commission on Immigration Reform, recommending a one-third cut in the legal influx, in effect rolling back the 1990 Immigration Act and conceding that the system was broke and needs fixing—*Alien Nation*'s much-denounced point.

President Clinton actually endorsed the Jordan Commission's findings, but House Majority Leader Dick Armey reflexively denounced them. "I'm hard-pressed," he said later, "to think of a single problem that would be solved by shutting off the supply of willing and eager new Americans."

This was an astonishing comment, and indicative of the fatal intellectual inertia still prevailing among many immigration enthusiasts. A nanosecond's thought would have revealed to Armey that, if immigration drives the U.S. population up 50 per cent by 2050—the Census Bureau's current estimate—it must inevitably cost the taxpayers massive additional moneys for schools, prisons, and other infrastructure, regardless of whether it also offers some benefit (which it does not).

As to other problems, I randomly picked these two stories out of the same newspaper (*New York Times*, December 10, 1995) as I was writing this:

> MEXICO WOOS U.S. MEXICANS, PROPOSING DUAL NATIONALITY
>
> [Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo supports an amendment to the Mexican constitution allowing Mexicans to retain their nationality when they take out U.S. citizenship.] "You're Mexicans—Mexicans who live north of the border," Mr. Zedillo told Mexican-American politicians in Dallas this year. He said he hoped the amendment would not only permit Mexican-Americans to better defend their rights at a time of rising anti-immigrant fervor, but also help create an ethnic lobby with political influence similar to that of American Jews.

See *Alien Nation*, pages 193–195. And—

> FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION BY IMMIGRANTS IS BECOMING CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN THE U.S.
>
> "As you get more and more immigrants from countries where this is a practice, particularly from Somalia, there are pockets of it [clitoridectomy] popping up wherever you see concentrations of settlements," Representative Pat Schroeder, the Colorado Democrat, said in an interview.
>
> . . . Ms. Schroeder [has] proposed laws similar to ones in Britain and France making genital mutilation a crime.

Of course, this is completely hypocritical. Either values are relative or they are not. What it shows once again is that immigration enthusiasts' enthusiasm for "diversity" is highly selective. They fully intend to pick and choose among diversities. In effect, immigration just gives them an excuse to remake America.

THERE are basically two views about how you can influence public debate. The Thin End of the Wedge Theory, favored by gentle souls like James W. Michaels and John O'Sullivan, respectively my editors at *Forbes* and NATIONAL REVIEW, is that while emphasizing how much agreement there is between you and everyone else, you politely but firmly insinuate modifications into the discussion, all of such an eminently sensible character that no one can possibly (or, at least, reasonably) object. Over time, you turn people around.

In contrast, there's the Thick End Theory. You pick up the wedge *by* its thin end and pound the opposition with the thick end, as hard as possible. Then you stand back and see what happens.

I have to admit that I lean toward the second approach. Some reviewers appreciate this. Jack Miles, in his very thoughtful essay in *The Atlantic Monthly*, said I was occasionally "an inspired controversialist, determined to storm the enemy's redoubt where it is strongest, not where it is weakest."

But other reviewers simply could not stomach the resulting bloodshed. For example, Jacquie Miller in the *Ottawa Citizen* worried, all too presciently, that "phrases can be plucked out of Brimelow's book that, shoved only slightly out of context, provide ammunition [the charge of racism]." She instanced my references to high black crime and Laotian welfare rates. Miss Miller also felt that the "credibility" of my account of Robert Kennedy's ludicrous underes-

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timate of Asian immigration resulting from the 1965 Act somehow suffered from what she described as "a typical slur": my adding that "tragically, Robert Kennedy himself was to be assassinated by an immigrant counted by the INS as Asian."

My first reaction to this sort of thing is incredulity. I believe truth should be an absolute defense, as it is in libel law. Laotians *do* have disproportionately high welfare rates, etc. And I said "tragically," didn't I?

Still, I recognize a problem. There is no point in repelling readers, at least those who show Miss Miller's symptoms of open-mindedness.

The problem, however, is not easily resolved. The truth, we are told after all, shall set us free. And it is precisely because of the media's flinching from facts that many Americans are unaware of the immigration dimensions of major public-policy dilemmas. It is because Americans are never reminded of the Jordanian origins of Sirhan Sirhan that they don't think to put him at the head of a list of infamous immigrants to counter the immigration enthusiasts' silly ploy of reeling off, in place of argument, the names of distinguished immigrants.

Former New York Mayor Ed Koch pulled this trick on me in the course of a disappointingly weak review in the *New York Post*: "Albert Einstein, Arturo Toscanini, Madeleine Albright, I. M. Pei, Patrick Ewing, John Shalikashvilli, Henry Kissinger, [etc., etc.] . . . Brimelow should squirm at their very mention."

My unsquirming answer, in part:

Sirhan; Giuseppe Esposito (founder of the Italian Mafia in the U.S.);. Meyer Lansky, "Lucky" Luciano, Al Capone (all organized crime); V. K. Ivankov (of the emerging "Russian Mafia"); Bruno Richard Hauptmann (Lindbergh kidnapper); Rosario Ames (wife and co-conspirator of traitor Aldrich Ames); Civil War Colonels John B. Turchin, USA, and Henry Wirz, CSA (respectively dismissed from U.S. Army for atrocities against Southern civilians and hung for atrocities against Union prisoners of war as camp commandant at Andersonville) . . .

And Charles Ponzi (inventor of the type of financial fraud named after him, whereby early investors are paid of with later investors' money, luring more in—just like the immigration enthusiasts' fantasy of how immigrants will bail out the Social Security system). Ben Wattenberg was still repeating this in his syndicated column in late 1995, despite *Alien Nation*'s conclusive refutation.

Still, I have hope for Koch, who is sensible about illegal immigration and other things. It seems he was simply unable to focus on my book's content because of the memory of his own immigrant parents. One of my happiest moments in taping the three-part immigration debate for William Buckley's *Firing Line* was establishing through cross-examination that Koch did not realize his parents could not immigrate under current law anyway (because they came from European countries that have been shouldered aside by the family-reunification inflow triggered by the 1965 Act).

I am less hopeful about the ACLU's Ira Glasser. In the second part of the *Firing Line* debate, he so far forgot himself as to accuse me of "lying" and bet me a year of his salary ($127,950, according to the 1993 American Institute of Philanthropy yearbook) that I had not discussed in *Alien Nation* the fragmentary evidence that the proportion of immigrants in state prisons does not repeat their over-representation at the federal level. Of course, I had (p. 184).

Glasser has now conceded this, buried in a long abusive ink-cloud of a private letter to me. Unaccountably, however, he neglected to include his check. As a gentleman, he will no doubt have rectified this oversight by the time the paperback edition is in readers' hands. But

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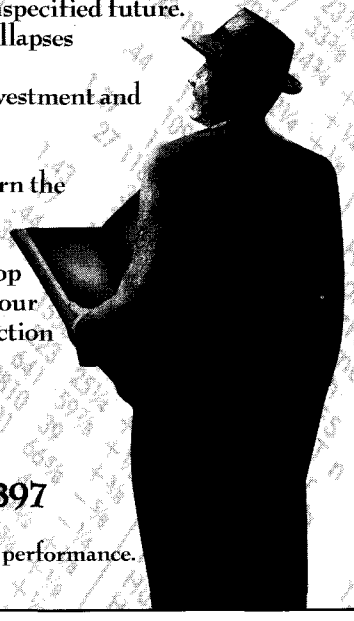

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you can fax him at the ACLU and ask—212-354-5290.

UNLIKE Charles Murray when he came to review the reviews of *The Bell Curve*, I have no intricate technical counter-arguments to refute, because no one provided any. My critics tended to behave like Macaulay's description of Southey in debate: either they simply reasserted their opinion, often using points that I had just painstakingly refuted; or they resorted to abuse. Or, quite often, both.

A classic example: Ben Wattenberg. At the start of my book tour, we had an affable disputation on Diane Rehm's celebrated WAMU talk show in Washington, not surprisingly since (we agreed) we had substantial policy proposals in common—such as the utility of an English-language preference.

A month later, with *Alien Nation* getting famous and legislation to reduce immigration being introduced by Rep. Lamar Smith and Sen. Alan Simpson, Wattenberg was transformed. He bristled with determination to anathematize me for mentioning the fact that government immigration policy is shifting the U.S. racial balance.

Particularly comic was Wattenberg's behavior when we taped his PBS-TV show *Think Tank*. He made the very common error of claiming that *Alien Nation* advocates a shift to white immigration (instead of the "time-out" from all immigration that I actually recommend). I objected that I had said nothing of the sort. Confidently, he started to read something from his lectern. It began, "Brimelow says . . ."

"That's a review!" I interjected. It was a knockdown blow. So much so that before the show appeared, Wattenberg (or his handlers) took the unusual but masterful step of going into the tape and *editing out the exchange*.

I never got my promised review copy of Wattenberg's own book, presumably because it tries to shrug off *Alien Nation* as "half hokum, half racism." Its title: *Values Matter Most*. Yeah.

Other high points:

—Harvard's Stephan Thernstrom in the *Washington Post*: "Has recent immigration to the U.S. really been huge? Not really . . . in proportion to total population, the more relevant comparison, it continues to be fairly low by historic standards . . ."

I had devoted all of Chapter 2 to crushing this vulgar error, basically by demonstrating that immigration is now high relative to population growth. When I politely pointed out Thernstrom's mistake he replied huffily, extemporizing that when population growth is static, even one immigrant would be 100 per cent of population growth. True, and so would 100 million immigrants—which is why I invented "the Wedge Chart" on page 47, showing the actual situation of 50 per cent higher population by 2050 because of immigration. Reviewers notoriously don't read books. But did Thernstrom even look at the pictures?

—Jacob Weisberg in *New York* magazine: ". . . Brimelow resorts to statistical abuses that would make a high-school debater blush. His first distortion is a chart that shows immigration in absolute numbers. By including those who applied for legal status under the temporary amnesty of a few years ago, he succeeds in producing a recent 'spike.' "

In fact, the IRCA amnesties are included in the official INS figures (Chart 1, pp. 30–31). And I discuss this problem and correct for them (Chart 2, p. 32). Even if Weisberg had not turned the page, he was present at my address to the Manhattan Institute when I pointed this out. But *New York* contemptibly refused to publish a correction letter from my researcher, Joseph E. Fallon.

Interestingly, there was a similar incident involving Weisberg and *The Bell Curve*. He wrote that at an AEI conference, the book's linking of intelligence and race was raised only when Glenn Loury, who is black, had left the room. In fact, Juan Williams, who is also black, was present throughout. And it was Weisberg himself who had raised the topic.

My theory: Weisberg is one of those people whose verbal slickness exceeds his intellectual powers. Faced with an argument that disturbs him emotionally, he cannot confine himself to the truth, let alone logic.

—Michael Lind in *The New Yorker*:

"uses the rhetoric of an after-dinner speaker at a Klavern banquet," etc. Well, the meteoric Lind, once a hanger-on of the conservative movement and NATIONAL REVIEW, is a special case. Less than two years earlier, Lind had written in *The New Republic* (August 23, 1993) that my original *NR* cover story, which constitutes about a quarter of *Alien Nation*, was "an eloquent restatement . . . of traditional American conservative arguments." I even received an effusive four-page private letter from him on the subject.

Alien Nation posed a peculiarly acute problem for Lind. His own soon-to-be-published book, *The Next American Nation*, actually called for immigration restriction just like *Alien Nation*, although in a way that tried to appeal to political liberals. Much of the debunking of immigration-enthusiast myths was eerily similar. Lind had adopted many arguments first developed in *NR*, such as the economic impact on blue-collar workers. He could purge *NR* from his footnotes, and he did. But he could not afford to have his new friends making close comparisons with *Alien Nation*. So he tried to drive it out of public debate.

It won't work, of course. Although there are good traditional liberal reasons to oppose immigration, modern liberalism is differently motivated. And sooner or later, another, younger Lind is going to come along and make his reputation with an article on "Michael Lind's Tainted Sources"—to paraphrase the title of Charles Lane's notorious attack on *The Bell Curve*. Additionally, Lind himself is too quarrelsome to remain within any political tendency for long. I suspect this strange, driven figure will next become a Mormon. No doubt of a heretical kind.

—*Wall Street Journal* editor Bob Bartley, in conversation when I was asking to defend myself on his editorial page (vainly, of course—*Journal* readers have been able to follow immigration critics' arguments only by deducing them from between the lines of continuous denunciations, like *Pravda* readers under Stalin): "The destiny of Europe has already been decided in North Africa" (because of the population explosion there).

"That's a poor lookout for the nation-state," I said, surprised.

"Oh yes," Bob said calmly. "I think the nation-state is finished. I think [Kenichi] Ohmae [a prophet of economic regionalism popular among businessmen] is right."

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I was thunderstruck. I knew the fans of the *Journal*'s editorial page, overwhelmingly conservative patriots, had no inkling of this. It would make a great *Wall Street Journal* front-page story:

WALL STREET JOURNAL EDITOR REVEALED AS SECRET ONE-WORLDER

CONSTERNATION AMONG FAITHFUL

IS POPE CATHOLIC?

SO, having given the immigration enthusiasts a good pounding with the thick end of the wedge, what do I see when I stand back? Writing in the Spring 1995 issue of *Social Contract*, the restrictionist movement's house magazine, Ira Mehlman offered this insight:

> Brimelow actually makes a very broad case against current immigration policies, but not surprisingly, almost everybody has focused on those chapters that deal with race, ethnicity and culture. . . . By bringing up subjects that had heretofore been considered taboo, Brimelow has scared a lot of people who have been observing the debate from the sidelines into conceding that our current immigration policies don't make economic sense.

In effect, I had won the economic debate by raising the question of racial balance and culture. The pattern that Mehlman spotted was so immensely powerful as to become funny. Again and again, reviews denounced me and *Alien Nation*, and then went on to say in effect that "of course" there are things wrong with immigration . . . just not the things I had in mind. Examples: Christopher Farrell, *BusinessWeek*; Tom Morganthau, *Newsweek*; Michael Lind; Jeff Turrentine; Jacob Weisberg.

"Glad to hear it, Mr. Weisberg," wrote Richard Brookhiser in the *New York Observer*. "Where can we find those earlier analyses of illegal immigration, and of the flaws of the 1965 Immigration Act? The ones you wrote pre-Brimelow?"

John Dizard, in a story in the *New York Observer* on the civil war among conservatives provoked by *Alien Nation*, quoted me as saying that "my opponents are hopelessly overextended intellectually and empirically, and are facing annihilation up and down the line."

Today, having been confronted with no new contrary argument or fact, I still think that. Special interests may win congressional battles. Ideas, and principles, will win the political war. □

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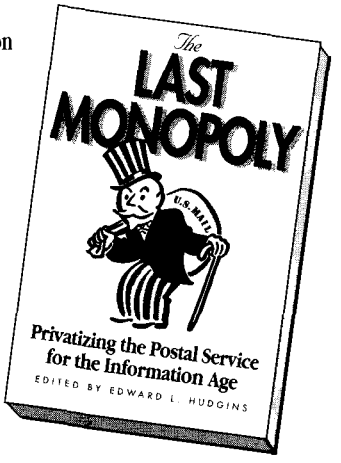

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

March 31, 1996

Dear Rusty,

We're tops in the polls, the economy looks solid, Perot might run, and no one's stepped on a land mine yet in Bosnia. So why am I so down?

I started feeling not-totally-up at yesterday's campaign-strategy meeting. We've been having these monthly meetings for a year now, and it was just me, Bill, Dick Morris, and HRC. And with HRC in Bosnia, I thought it would be a cozy threesome—a time when Bill, Dick, and I could start some long-range thinking about the next 12 years, when the country transitions from a Bill Clinton operating system to an Al Gore operating system.

But now that polls have started showing us 23 points ahead of Bob Dole, the room was packed. There was George Stephanopoulos, Mandy Grunwald, Mack McClarty, Vernon Jordan, Leon Panetta, the entire White House Fellows program, Joe Klein (for some reason), and some people I've never seen before. A large man in a blue windbreaker sat against the wall, eating doughnuts out of a carton. I walked up to him. "You're a Secret Service agent, right?"

"Wrong." He reached into his pocket and handed me a card. "AFL-CIO, campaign division. You gots a problem with me, you gots a problem with my boys on K Street. So what's it gonna be?"

"This is supposed to be a closed meeting," I said, as politely as possible.

"So close it," he said, shrugging. He jerked a thumb at Stephanopoulos. "Kick pretty boy out. But me, I paid 35 mil for this seat and I ain't givin' it up. So if you'll excuse me, I'd like to get back to my cruller."

This was too much. We had made such great strides in the past few months keeping the meetings organized and efficient. It seemed like our poll numbers were encouraging the staff to slip back into old bad habits. I ducked out into the hallway to wait for Bill.

As he strode up, I stopped him. "Bill," I said, "I've got some bad news."

He went pale and bit his lower lip. "Oh my Lord," he quavered. "It's Hillary, isn't it? She's been killed in a Serb mortar attack? Oh what a fool I was to allow her to go!"

"Bill!" I said. "Hillary didn't get killed in a mortar attack."

"A Greek terrorist suicide bus bomb?"

"No," I said.

"What, then?" he asked, sighing.

"I just wanted to warn you that the meeting is packed. We're starting to lose our discipline again. We're getting too complacent. This meeting has so many people, it could go on forever."

Bill smiled. "I know," he said. "Isn't it cool?"

The meeting itself went not much better. Actually the AFL-CIO guy wasn't a problem. He never made a sound, except for some paper rustling and napkin dabbing. He and Bill argued briefly over who touched the honey-glazed first, but other than that, he wasn't there.

But Stephanopoulos must have asked nine times if the time wasn't right for Bill to resubmit his health-care program, now that his poll numbers are above 50 per cent. Dick patiently explained nine times that the reason Bill's poll numbers were above 50 per cent was because people had forgotten about his health-care program, which, frankly, I dispute, since many portions of it—the mental-health task force in particular—enjoyed widespread support.

Finally, the subject came around to the budget.

"I'm concerned," I said, "that the budget plan may end up hurting more than helping us."

"How so?" Dick asked.

"Well," I said, "I think the people are looking for leadership here, and I'm not sure that we're giving it to them."

"We balance the budget in seven years, Mr. Vice President. What more do you want?"

"But we don't, really," I said. "We don't make any real cuts for four years. All the cuts are made in the back three years."

Bill chimed in. "Al, with all due respect, those 'back three years' you're talking about—hey, I plan to be in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as Dean of the Kennedy School, working on two things—my memoirs as a two-termer, and some co-eds."

"But I plan to be here, filling out my first term as your successor," I said. "So why don't we take the long view, and spread the budget cuts evenly over the seven years?"

Bill looked out the window for a moment. He took a bite of his doughnut. "You know," he said quietly, "I'll bet George Bush said that same thing in this same room 12 years ago."

And then he headed out of the meeting. So you can see why I'm depressed.

Your pal, Al

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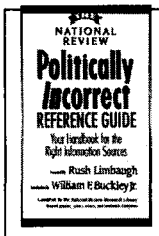

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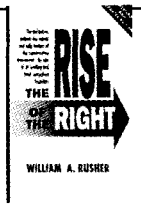

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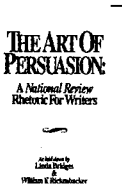

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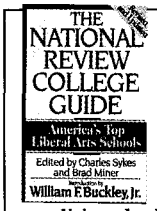
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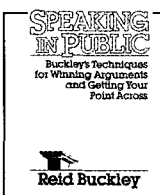

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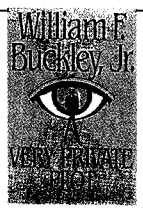

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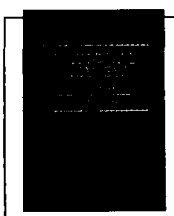

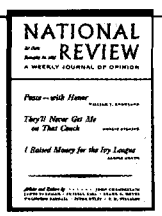

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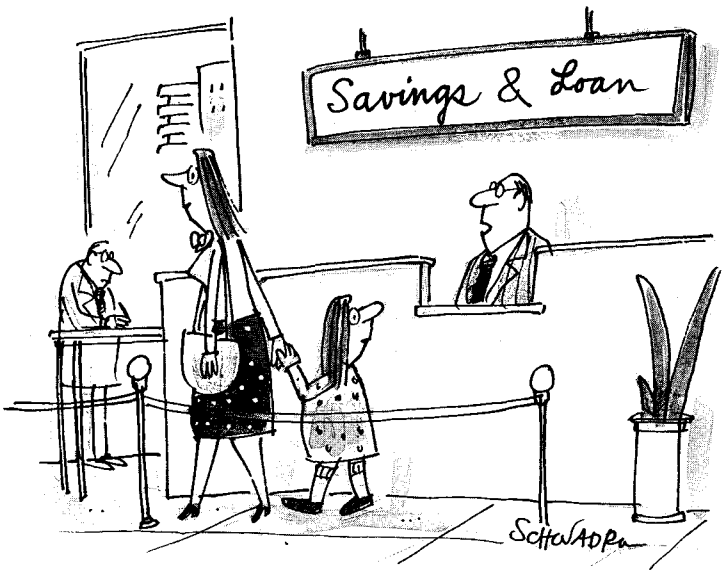
More Passion, Please

Had Arthur loosed Excalibur
As Merlin looked devout,
Then uttered the immortal line:
"That's what it's all about,"
Knighthood would not have flowered, nor
Would have Sir Walter's stole
Been cast across that puddle to
Assist a royal stroll.

—W. H. von Dreele



"Sorry, kid, no more free lollipops—not until we get bailed out by the feds."

"How long have you suffered from this obsession?"

"I threw in a couple of paragraphs about my love life to make my resume interesting."

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

What Is an American?

JEFFREY HART

JAMES Burnham once remarked that for Americans the only plausible ideal of conduct is the gentleman. That sounded rather insurgent. But what else is there? The rock star? Phil Donahue? The Godfather? Natty Bumppo or Huck Finn? The Plains Indian? Mailer's criminal hipster?

Of course every civilization worth bothering about has projected ideals of conduct. Athenian schoolboys studied and commented upon Achilles and Odysseus. Socrates and Jesus asked for an almost impossible internalizing of the heroic. Other worthy ideals have been proposed: the Roman orator, the medieval knight, the courtly lover, the humanist statesman, the Enlightenment man of reason.

The idea of the gentleman has been part of American culture from the earliest days. The ideal has evolved in more complex ways in America than it has in England, whence it came, and Burnham's remark will have to be explored and refined. But essentially he was right.

In America a variety of distinctive ethnicities and cultures have flourished, but only at the lower levels of the social pyramid. As Americans move upward these ethnic particularities disappear, or become private matters at most; they are all but invisible in individuals who have reached the board of Chase Manhattan or General Motors, the President's Cabinet, or the roster of university presidents. In the coatroom outside their meetings you will not find parked any cowboy hats, turbans, yarmulkes, sombreros, or other ethnic paraphernalia. The power elite dresses in good taste, speaks standard English within a set range of tone and volume, has good manners, and generally conforms to the modern American version of the gentlemanly ideal as derived principally from England and crystallized there between about 1688 and 1715.

But before returning to that central theme I would like to conduct a brief *tour d'horizon*.

If you consult the card catalogue of a decent library, you may be surprised at the number of entries under "Americanization" and "Americanism," neither of them favored terms nowadays. They designate, respectively, a process and a goal. There exists no comparable literature of "Englishization" or "Frenchism," presumably because everyone considers those identities thoroughly known. This is not to say that this literature consists of attempts to discover the elements of Americanism. Rather, the literature proceeds as if they are known but nonetheless need to be articulated and raised to full consciousness.

The literature of Americanization and Americanism surged in response to the great and unprecedented waves of immigration in the nineteenth century, which posed the *E pluribus unum* problem in both ethnic and religious terms. The literature includes autobiography, discursive analysis, what amount to manuals of citizenship, and quite stirring anthologies of thoughts on the American identity.

The Americanization of Edward Bok appeared in 1921 and became a best-seller. Born in Holland, Bok arrived in America as a child. He rose to become a prominent magazine editor and a friend of Presidents; he was especially close to Theodore Roosevelt, who "made Americanism more stirring, more real," than Bok had ever felt it. Not surprisingly Bok sees education, hard work, and opportunity as central to his own Americanization.

This vast literature is by no means obsolete or quaint, except in its forthrightness. Some things are American, and some are not. For example, we find Woodrow Wilson saying this in 1915:

> You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. America does not consist of groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American, and the man who goes among you to trade upon your nationality is no worthy son to live under the Stars and Stripes.

The subject of Americanism and Catholicism is very much in the foreground of this literature, and the problem is not religious doctrine but the relationship of the Catholic to Rome, a foreign entity. That relationship, if subservient, was held to be "un-American."

The problem of Communism and Americanism took a somewhat similar form during the 1950s. The CPUSA made every effort to disguise the fact that it was controlled by Moscow, but that fact was evident in the Party's subservience to the Moscow line and has been conclusively demonstrated

Mr. Hart is a senior editor of NR.

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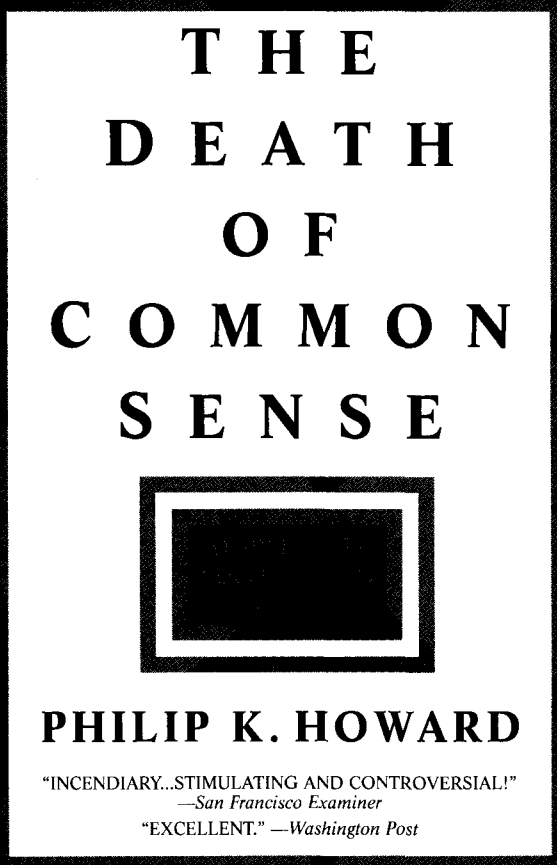

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with the opening of the Soviet archives. The consensus emerged that a man might advocate sweeping changes in the organization of society and still be considered an American, but he could not be thus considered if he belonged to a Moscow-controlled party: heresy yes, conspiracy no. (On this there is some difference between the American consensus and the English one. If the Dean of Canterbury or Lord Dankcastle becomes a Moscow-subservient Communist, he does not become less English; he becomes an English eccentric. "I say, old Dankcastle is daft, isn't he? His father was daft too, you know.")

A NATION'S literature is surely a part of its historical memory. Yet the works we now consider our best stand in an odd relation to lived American experience. Anyone can name the American classics: Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Thoreau, Emerson, Dickinson, Twain, Whitman, and on through Eliot, Pound, Faulkner, Hemingway, Fitzgerald. All their works are intense and strange. They constitute a literature of extreme emotion, of extreme individuality, of individuality in unresolvable conflict with society and tending toward romance and myth.

What are we to make of the extreme character of American literature? It is impossible to think that no relationship exists between such a literature and the more general lived experience of the nation.

Consider T. S. Eliot's attempt in his *Notes towards a Definition of Culture* (1948) to evoke a sense of lived English experience through a list of tangible things: "Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the twelfth of August, a cup final, the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections, beetroot in vinegar, nineteenth-century Gothic churches, and the music of Elgar." The following might be an American list: The summer cycle of Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day; Joe DiMaggio and Joe Montana and Jack Kramer; the wide bright beaches of Long Island and the New Jersey shore; the old jazz joints on 52nd Street; fireflies on a summer evening; the Golden Gate Bridge; corn on the cob; Irving Berlin and Rodgers and Hammerstein; Christmastime in New England and on Fifth Avenue; the Mississippi River; grass courts at Forest Hills, Southampton, Newport; the idea of the Pacific and the Battle of Midway; an ice-cold martini. To the extent that such a catalogue has a representative quality, it poses the problem of the relationship between the American literary canon, with its emotionally radical and even apocalyptic polarities, and the apparently very different quality of actual lived American experience.

I do not offer here to solve this problem, but only to say one or two things about it. First, our now classic list of books represents a *selection*, one made through the lens of modernism. It is not true that Poe is a better poet than Longfellow; Poe is *in* and Longfellow is *out*, but Poe is *in* not so much as a writer but as a disconsolate figure.

Second, the hyper-individualism of the American classics is not as foreign to American culture as it might at first seem. The Framers of the Constitution and the authors of *The Federalist* were profoundly concerned about the political tyranny of the majority. In cultural terms, Tocqueville was worried about conformity and tyranny of opinion in the new democracy. The American canon wages war against that feared tyranny. It seeks emotional elbow room. Huck lights out for the territory, Nick Adams goes fishing, Emily Dickinson writes alone in her room. In Boston, Emerson delivered his famous lecture on "Self-Reliance" not to an audience of Ahabs and Deerslayers but to an audience he considered in serious danger of succumbing to stifling conformity. This hyper-individualism constitutes a polemic against the leveling tendencies of democratic culture.

OF COURSE the whole idea of the gentleman is an offense against the idea of social equality. In his *Studies in Classic American Literature*, D. H. Lawrence has some marvelous fun with the comedy involved in all of this. Cooper's American gentry, the Effinghams, are returning to America from Europe, where inequalities are taken for granted. Aboard their ocean liner they encounter a bumptious American lout named Septimus Dodge. He intrudes, fawns, cringes, and bullies. The aristocratic Effinghams are at his mercy. Lawrence re-imagines the scene.

> He is their compatriot, so they may not disown him. Had they been English, of course, they would never once have let themselves become aware of his existence. But no. They are American democrats, and therefore, if Mr. Dodge marches up and says, "Mr. Effingham? Pleased to meet you, Mr. Effingham"—why, then, Mr. Effingham is forced to reply, "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Dodge." If he didn't, he would have the terrible hounds of democracy on his heels and at his throat the moment he landed in the Land of the Free.

As the example from Cooper shows, the idea of the gentleman and its American dilemmas have been there from the early days, indeed from much earlier than Cooper. George Washington, "Gentleman George," was the Father of his Country and also its First Gentleman, but had the sense to draw the line at the Society of the Cincinnati and its aristocratic political pretensions. The American literary tradition contains a strong and even dominant polemic against the idea of the gentleman, and, like Septimus, it manages to keep the gentleman on the ropes.

True enough, the gentleman may be vulnerable enough in particular examples. In George Apley, John Marcher, and J. Alfred Prufrock this literature tells us that gentlemen are snobbish, desiccated, hypocritical, emotionally repressed, and sexually inadequate. They lead unlived lives. Especially in Boston, they are refined past the possibility of being civilized.

Yet though the indictment may be persuasive in the particular, it hardly touches the ideal of the gentleman itself. Emerson was shrewd on this. In his essay "Manners" he says that while the word "gentleman" is "a homage to personal and incommunicable properties," yet he knows the complete idea must have a core of steel, a sense of the potentially dangerous. If you want a gentleman, Emerson says, "bruisers and pirates are of better promise than talkers or clerks." By those I guess he meant preachers and academics.

In a very rich recent book on the culture of tennis, which he uses as a gauge of social morale, the sociologist E. Digby Baltzell states that the idea of the gentleman is not bounded by social class or race, that Arthur Ashe may have been the last gentleman in tennis, and that the idea of the gentleman "leveled up" to include boys from the Los Angeles public courts who tried to conform to the ideal.

Despite the literary polemic against it, and despite the leveling pull of democracy, the idea of the gentleman has been a powerful presence in America. As I said earlier, every civi-

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lized culture has an ideal of how to live. The idea of the gentleman does not approach in severity the ideal of Socrates or Jesus, but it nevertheless has its beauty. And it is available; it has been and remains an ideal within our society.

And so we return to James Burnham, and to his view that the gentleman is the only plausible and persisting ideal of conduct in American life; plausible in the sense that while it is an elevated and elevating ideal it nevertheless operates within, and is not in radical opposition to, society itself.

THE gentlemanly ideal came to America most directly from England. In its modern form it was crystallized under special historical circumstances, arising out of the seventeenth-century conflict between Cavalier and Roundhead, secularized during the Restoration to a conflict between landed aristocrat and merchant commoner.

The ideal of the gentleman mediated between these polarities, representing a sort of peace treaty. The high-bred strutting aristocrat like the Earl of Rochester gradually became a period piece. The next generation underwent a forced reformation of manners. The powdered wigs and silk stockings, the drunkenness, promiscuity, spitting on the floor, and dueling, had to go. The aristocrat donned a sober coat and trousers, curbed his arrogance, at least made a show of respecting marriage, went into business with wealthy commoners, and allowed his sons and daughters to marry them. He thus saved his neck from the guillotine, which became busy across the Channel where no such bargain had been struck.

In its specifically American form the idea of the gentleman has had its regional variants, and yet it has retained a core of distinctive characteristics: self-control, subordination of the ego, understatement, respect for solid achievement, courtesy (especially to social inferiors), respect for women, family responsibility, professional obligation, respect for education, regard for athletics.

The New England aristocracy, centered in Boston, was the most refined of all. Characteristically, when Matthew Arnold visited Boston to lecture, Boston was disappointed to find him somewhat coarse in his manners. Indeed, Boston's sense of itself was based upon complex refusals and exclusions. Boston looked askance at the post–Civil War wealth of New York City and its turbulent energies, and turned aside from the prospect of great fortunes in railroads, shipping, steel, real estate, and finance. It did not assimilate the new money, and hence excused itself from participation in the new power. The irony and disdain of Henry Adams is paradigmatic. To illustrate, may I invoke Harvard's famous Porcellian, an undergraduate club of extraordinary exclusiveness? Porcellian turned down Franklin Roosevelt; it is devilishly hard to join. But there is nothing there, hardly a club at all. The quarters consist entirely of a large room over a row of stores in Harvard Square. There is a bar, a billiards table, and a mirror arranged so that members can sit and view Massachusetts Avenue outside without themselves being seen. And that's it. Virtually the sole activity of Porcellian is screening applicants. Porcellian is the pinnacle of the Boston idea. Less is more. Zero is a triumph.

Louis Kirstein—the multimillionaire father of Lincoln Kirstein—was excluded from the best Boston society, since his millions came from Filene's department store. In New York, Isidor Straus of Macy's fared far better, along with the Belmonts, Schiffs, Guggenheims, and Sulzbergers. New York was more energetic and less exclusive than Boston and allowed these newcomers to join its Morgans, Astors, Vanderbilts, and Rockefellers, themselves once raw.

John O'Hara, now vastly undervalued because of his trashy later novels, is in one of his aspects important as the meticulous bard of the provincial gentleman. A sort of anti–Sinclair Lewis, O'Hara admires the men of substance, style, and authority in towns like his Gibbsville, Pennsylvania. In *Appointment in Samarra*, the flawed Julian English, even in disgrace, retains in his wife's eyes the gentlemanly aura he once possessed. Of course the following passage represents the wife's point of view, not necessarily O'Hara's. It is possible to surround it with irony, but not altogether wise:

> He was like someone who had died in the war, some young officer in an overseas cap and a Sam Browne belt and one of those tunics that button up to the neck but you can't see the buttons, and an aviator's wings on the breast where the breast pocket ought to be, and polished laced boots with a little mud on the soles, and a cigarette in one hand and his arm around an American in a French uniform. For her Julian had that gallantry that had nothing to do with fighting but was attitude and manner.

Her word "manner" perhaps is wrong. She sees in her husband what Castiglione and the Renaissance called *sprezzatura*, meaning a grace that seems natural because it has become so habitual.

The American South had its variations, distinguished by the enormous pressure of the past bearing down upon all its gentlemen. Some sense of its traumatic defeat is always present, a necessary stoicism, and the traces of a code of behavior that derives in part from the seventeenth-century Cavalier—another defeated figure—but more immediately from the novels of Walter Scott, the great elegist of Scottish chivalry and, of course, defeat.

The vast American West cannot place on the shoulders of its gentlemen the weight of a past it does not have or require of them the manners and the aura of gentlemen from the cities of the East. Yet elements of the gentlemanly ideal are discernible even there. Owen Wister, himself a Philadelphia gentleman, made an important contribution to the idea of the Western gentleman in his colossal best-seller *The Virginian* (1902). Wister virtually invented the mythic noble cowboy, a figure more American than the Easterner because "natural," though not an equalitarian. His roots are in the Declaration of Independence, which "declared that every man should have equal liberty to seek his own level." The cowboy hero comes off as superior. Yet rejecting the East, he does not reject important elements of the gentleman's code. He is no braggart but rather laconic, he behaves honorably toward friends and enemies, he respects women, he obeys the rules even in a gunfight, in his own way he is courteous, and he never has to apologize or explain because he always does the right thing. In Wister's treatment, the noble cowboy is even learned in a way, picking up some Shakespeare, Thackeray, and Browning. Owen Wister's cowboy was, of course, in considerable part a myth, but the elements of his portrait did have an effect on behavior in the West.

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There is no doubt that we could carry the discussion of the gentleman down to the present moment, naming names of those who qualify and those who do not, as painful as that might turn out to be. There is no doubt, for example, that being seen as gentlemen, though of very different sorts, was part of the popularity of Franklin Roosevelt, Jack Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan, and thus part of their power. Murray Kempton recently wrote very much to the point when his attention fell upon the brief possibility of Colin Powell as a candidate for the Presidency:

> Every canon in the myth that we are a classless society is a falsehood, with the solitary exception of our tender of universal opportunity to ambitions for gentility. We have never offered every child humbly born an equal chance to grow rich—or, lately, to make a decent living—but we have, at least, allowed every lass to become a lady and every lad a gentleman.

Mr. Kempton sensed the desired qualities in General Powell.

But let us suspend here discussion of public figures, living or dead, drawing the veil compassionately over them; let us turn to the fictitious gentlemen and ladies of our movie screen. Throughout the Thirties, Forties, and Fifties, the gentleman was a prominent movie figure. Fred Astaire, Cary Grant, Jimmy Stewart, and many other lesser figures in a comparable mold were all immensely popular. In all of these, perhaps because of the Depression and no doubt also because of democracy, the idea of the gentleman was considerably softened by an admixture of the Nice Guy. Yet the essential characteristics remained. In *Top Hat* (1935) Fred Astaire triumphantly established this pattern, the man of grace and charm and refined manners who indicates his social superiority through his ease. Yet Astaire and the others were Nice Guys as well, and thus acceptable to a mass audience. They are all very American, yet, as in Astaire and Grant, sometimes manage to acknowledge the English roots of the idea. Most important, if pushed they can fight. In an intermediate category are such figures as those played by Humphrey Bogart, Alan Ladd, and Robert Redford. They are toughs, but also chivalrous, and behave according to a code of honor. They give hints of gentlemanliness.

Toward the bottom of the pyramid are such characters as those played by Edward G. Robinson, George Raft, Marlon Brando, James Cagney, Tony Curtis, and Anthony Quinn. Don't expect any of those to show up on the board of Chase Manhattan, in the President's Cabinet, or as president of Princeton.

To be sure, the gentleman figure is rare enough in current popular culture (Anthony Hopkins? Harrison Ford?) but that is because, since Elvis and the Beatles, popular culture has been thoroughly redneckized and proleized.

James Burnham was right. America may be multi-ethnic and various, but it is not multi-cultural—at any rate, not at or near the top. □

Processed History

FORREST McDONALD

AMONG the casualties of the computer age, perhaps the most disturbing is the decline of clarity in the use of the English language by people in what Dick Armey calls the talking trades. I am not thinking only of politicians, who long ago learned the utility of speaking in forked tongues, or the likes of bureaucrats and sociologists, who develop jargons to disguise their lack of anything to say. Rather, I have in mind historians, journalists, novelists, teachers, and other people to whom clarity of expression ought to be crucial but who increasingly have lost contact with what they are saying.

A case in point in Theodore Draper's *A Struggle for Power*. Draper repeats himself endlessly, capping his performance by reproducing, substantially verbatim, seven paragraphs on pages 167–170 that he had previously used on pages 3–5. He introduces characters he has already introduced at length. He garbles his footnotes, for example by citing "*ibid.*" when his text could not possibly be taken from the source cited immediately above. The charitable way to account for such slipshod work is to suppose that it was composed on a word processor.

More is at stake here than just sloppy craftsmanship. Draper has set out to formulate a major reinterpretation of what was at issue in the coming of the American Revolution. The view that has prevailed for about three decades now (one that itself replaced an earlier, simplistic economic interpretation) is that of the ideological school: the Revolution was the product of the Old Whig or country-party mentality that Americans imbibed from late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century English writers and blended with a revived enthusiasm for classical republicanism. That is nonsense, Draper asserts; the slogans and declarations of principles and constitutional arguments on both sides were rhetorical smokescreens, employed to obscure reality, which Draper sees as the naked struggle for power.

A Struggle for Power: The American Revolution, by Theodore Draper (Times, 524 pp., $32.50)

How, he asks, were Americans to be taken seriously when they professed loyalty to the crown but no allegiance to Parliament (constitutionally an impossible position to take in England since 1689), or when they groaned that paying a three-penny tax on a pound of tea would lead them into slavery or, indeed, amount to slavery? Surely, Draper suggests, Washington was disingenuous when he wrote that the British ministry was following a studied design to reduce Americans under slavery, and was merely playing with words when he referred to the enemy as the "ministerial force," not "His Majesty's forces," to affirm loyalty to George III and opposition to his ministers.

Draper can reach his cynical, power-struggle conclusion, I suspect, because he has somehow been desensitized to the nuances of language. Whether or not the computer is the culprit, his brain seems to have been robbed of

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the capacity to wander—appreciatively, comprehendingly, and joyfully—in the world of ideas, and especially among the convoluted delicacies of eighteenth-century political thought.

Americans of the Revolutionary generation were remarkably literate and knew how to use language persuasively, but they used it differently from the way we do. All educated men were trained in rhetoric, which means that they persuaded through the enthymeme, the major premise of which is not absolutely and axiomatically true, as in a syllogism, but based upon the reputable beliefs of the audience. Such beliefs are conventional and are normally formulated in code words. We use code words in discussing politics today and understand one another. Eighteenth-century Americans employed very different codes, and they are not easy for moderns to crack: it takes years of immersing oneself in the sources.

Moreover, the language of country-party ideology, the most commonly employed political language at that time in America, was hyperbolic and somewhat paranoid. Thus, for instance, the Virginian George Mason said in 1787 that he would rather cut off his right hand than sign the Constitution, which seems extreme until one realizes that Virginia political figures routinely offered themselves for mutilation in service of the most trivial causes. As for the paranoid style, Americans' understanding of English history was that it had been an ongoing struggle between wicked and designing men, who were perpetually seeking to reduce the people under absolute tyranny, and the people themselves, whose vigilance must be eternal. They thought of events in such terms and were accustomed to hearing them described in such terms. Hence when Patriots equated the tea tax with slavery, they could have said instead, "If we let Parliament impose even a trifling tax, it will by degrees be increased until inevitably it becomes burdensome," and that would have expressed their meaning. But nobody would have heard; one does not whisper at a fireworks display.

Had Theodore Draper let the cacophony of eighteenth-century voices into his brain rather than trying to reduce it to simplistic megabytes, he might have noticed an enormous variety of power relationships, each containing naked struggles for power: not merely between the Americans and the British, contesting for power within the Empire, as he supposes, but also among Americans who competed to rule at home; among rival ideologies which offered disparate answers; among competing experiences in colonial government; among competing experiences in self-government; among myriad economic interest groups; and among religions, philosophies, family connections, ethnicities, and singularly cussed individuals who just "knew" what part they had been chosen to play in the unfolding drama. He noticed none of this, and as a result his striving for originality and hard-boiled realism produced old-hat naïveté. □

Building Better Baloney

PHILLIP E. JOHNSON

THERE is a classic story about a scientist who kept a horseshoe over the door to his laboratory. One day one of his colleagues asked him, "You don't seriously believe that thing brings you good luck, do you?"

"Of course not," responded the scientist. "But it seems to work whether you believe in it or not."

I can imagine Carl Sagan commenting on that story. There is a distressing survival of superstition and pseudoscience among people who ought to know better. Even college graduates believe in UFO abductions, crop circles as signals from alien beings, astrology, faith healing, and so on. Often they convince themselves that a superstitious practice "works" because of anecdotal evidence.

The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark, by Carl Sagan (Random House, 457 pp., $25.95)

In short, many people believe whatever they want to believe, and support their belief with bad reasoning. What such credulous people need, according to Carl Sagan, is a "baloney-detector kit." (The term actually used in scientific circles is more pungent.) A baloney detector is simply a good grasp of logical reasoning and investigative procedure. Thus, Sagan urges us to obtain independent confirmation of facts, to avoid getting overly attached to our own ideas, and to distinguish between falsifiable and unfalsifiable hypotheses.

Critical thinking so defined is obviously desirable in principle; the controversial part is that Sagan applies the detector only to other people's baloney. He mainly picks on easy targets like UFO abductions, faith healers, and New Age spirit guides. No doubt some people need to be told that Dr. John Mack (the Harvard Medical School professor who believes the UFO-abduction reports) is so lacking in judgment that even his fellow Harvard professors were embarrassed enough to spend long committee hours seeking some legally defensible way to get rid of him. The kind of readers who buy 457-page books about scientific reasoning could use something a bit more challenging.

For example, if it is a serious error to confuse correlation with causation, what does Sagan think about the methodology by which the cause of AIDS was determined? (The theory that HIV causes AIDS is based almost entirely on a correlation between antibodies to the virus and death from a variety of previously unrelated ailments, all of which sometimes occur in the absence of HIV infection.) How are citizens to distinguish between scare tactics and genuine science when environmentalists demand that some chemical be banned? The work of Berkeley biochemist Bruce Ames, showing that industrial products attacked as potential carcinogens are frequently less carcinogenic than many naturally occurring chemicals, would have made an excellent case study.

Instead of addressing meaty scientific topics like these, this rambling book is filled with off-hand opinions supported mainly by anecdotal evidence, in flagrant violation of Sagan's own professed standards. When it comes to social programs, for instance, Sagan reasons a lot like that scientist who relied on the horseshoe. He tells us that "recent research shows" that malnutrition causes reduced academic performance, and that federal programs aimed

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at preventing malnutrition "have been shown to work." No description of the research accompanies these pronouncements.

In an exhibition of credulity that would embarrass Dr. John Mack, Sagan describes a literacy program for children as successful on the basis of subjective judgments by participating parents and teachers about vaguely defined items like "improved self-confidence." The decisive proof of success is that "not one of the children had to repeat any grade in elementary school." There is no mention of control groups or standardized reading tests. And these days what child has to repeat a grade, whether or not he can read?

Sagan wants to convince students that science is exciting, and to that end he favors encouraging them to question everything, because "there is no such thing as a dumb question." It turns out that there is one question that really is too dumb to bother with, however, and that is whether a Creator might have played some role in the history of life. Sagan treats anyone who asks that question with undisguised contempt:

> I meet many people who are offended by evolution, who passionately prefer to be the personal handicraft of God than to arise by blind physical and chemical forces over aeons from slime. They also tend to be less than assiduous in exposing themselves to the evidence. Evidence has little to do with it. What they wish to be true, they believe is true. Only 9 per cent of Americans accept the central finding of modern biology that human beings (and all the other species) have slowly evolved by natural processes from a succession of more ancient beings with no divine intervention needed along the way.

Plainly, one thing that is missing from Carl Sagan's baloney-detector kit is a device capable of distinguishing science as a method of investigation from scientific atheism, a philosophy uncritically accepted by many scientists. Have scientific experiments demonstrated that non-living chemicals can arrange themselves spontaneously into living organisms? Does the claim that natural selection can turn a bacterium into a butterfly rest mainly upon an unsupported extrapolation from instances of variation within a species? Perhaps we should consider the alternative hypothesis that it is the dogmatic Darwinists who are less than assiduous in exposing themselves to the evidence, and that the reason so many Americans are skeptical of the more expansive claims of Darwinism is that they have their own baloney detectors working.

Currently, the state Board of Education in Alabama is attempting to encourage critical thinking about evolution by requiring the insertion of a sort of truth-in-advertising notice in biology textbooks. The Alabama statement notes that the textbooks use the term "evolution" in a shifting and hence misleading way, illustrating the process with examples of small-scale variation within the species and then claiming to have demonstrated that purposeless material forces can account for the entire history of life. The statement charges that the books also ignore evidence, particularly fossil evidence, which tends to falsify the orthodox neo-Darwinian theory.

The charges can be supported by voluminous citations from the textbooks and scientific literature, but the Carl Sagans of scientific atheism are not likely to give them a fair hearing. When the common people start getting skeptical about the wrong things, it's time to take their baloney detectors away. □

Home Alone

MAGGIE GALLAGHER

IT begins as a peculiarly American fairy tale: Under the burning Mexican sun, a vivacious German Swiss New Orleans belle meets and marries a reserved, older Irish Texan oil wildcatter. *They live happily ever after*, and in the process spawn a talented brood of ten children, the most famous of whom, William F. Buckley Jr., transforms America's political landscape.

So Carol Buckley begins her first book, *At the Still Point*, a memoir about growing up and growing old amidst the sprawling Buckley clan precisely at that contentious roiling moment of history in which "a 1950s girl" was forced to become, however reluctantly, "a 1960s woman."

At the Still Point: A Memoir, by Carol Buckley (Simon & Schuster, 255 pp., $23)

Luminous, tightly disciplined, deeply moving, *At the Still Point* is a remarkable book, all the more so because in the hands of a lesser writer it might have been so bad: the travails of a poor little rich girl, trading on self-pity and the name of her celebrated brother.

For the tale Miss Buckley recounts is not the happy one that *NR* readers will recognize from the pens of other Buckleys. She grew up in "a home that my brother Bill remembers as providing unmitigated pleasure" but which for her evoked a sense of solitude and of quiet, "for I was born an only child in a family of ten," six years younger than her nearest sibling, Maureen.

At the Still Point offers endearing glimpses into the private lives of the Buckleys, such as a brief cameo of the young Bill Buckley asking his baby sister what shoes to wear with what suit; or the "incident" in which Priscilla, Jane, and Trish were arrested for spreading honey on the pews of the local Episcopal church. But what is remarkable is how little this book depends on celebrity to maintain interest.

For this, despite the Buckleys' Catholicism, is a decidedly WASP version of a tell-all book: emotional reticence marks every page, even those in which the deepest revelations are made. This reticence gives the memoir its emotional power. If one characteristic of art is to strip experience of that personal quality which merely embarrasses, Carol Buckley succeeds better than most novelists. The book's claim on our attention ultimately rests, not on what is merely individual to her, but what is universal in human experience.

Often one of the corollaries of being part of a large family is much tragedy: love, always a risky endeavor, multiplies losses as well as triumphs. For Carol Buckley, a lonely childhood culminated in a series of devastating losses early in adulthood: first the loss of her strong, beloved father to a series of debilitating strokes; a stillborn baby, swiftly followed by the loss of her favorite sister,

Miss Gallagher is the author of The Abolition of Marriage: How We Destroy Lasting Love *(Regnery).*

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Maureen, which precipitated also the loss of her faith. "Nothing would bring Maureen back, my laughing, loving sister. It was finished." A year later, the sudden death of her oldest sister, Aloïse, a surrogate mother, caused Carol Buckley to lose her mind.

In the mental hospital, she writes, "I started joining the less hostile demented in their delusions. For the little old lady who called for taxis all day long, I played telephone, and sometimes taxicab, too. I went where she directed me, I tooted my horn. I bowed to the 'Empress,' and curtsied low, just as a visiting Rose Kennedy had taught us to at Noroton." A nurse, watching her efforts to comfort her fellow patients, told her that she had a talent for working with disturbed people: "Some (healthy) part of me still connected with others and sought to soothe and care for them."

After she regained her mental stability, she and her husband divorced. But she writes self-deprecatingly, "The needy woman I was then had to find a man." For it is part of the cultural script of Sixties women like Carol Buckley that something as simple and elemental and inevitable as the desire to be loved should be viewed as a character defect: "That is a difficult time to be alone, the change of seasons," she writes, describing her difficult "growth" after her second marriage ended. "'Oh, look, it's snowing!' I want to say. A sense of my own autonomy would develop slowly as I learned to focus on others, and to leave myself behind."

She found self-confidence in meeting the challenges of social work, and she found the limitations of work, as well. "For though I was kind and competent at what I did, I was not irreplaceable. Not one bit. Not ever. And that understanding always comes as a blow."

The book's hopeful title is borrowed from T. S. Eliot: "Except for the point, the still point, there would be no dance, and there is only the dance." Miss Buckley celebrates the peace that comes from living fully in the present moment: "In the absence of a lover . . . I was free to evolve, becoming simply me." It is the conventional wisdom, conventionally put, the self's deep content with itself.

And yet: "I glance up and see that snow has covered the ground without my noticing," she writes at memoir's end. "The dogs are still, content in sleep. 'Oh, look,' I want to say, 'it's snowing.'" □

DELECTATIONS

By the Book

LINDA BRIDGES

A FEW years ago I came across a book on how to clear the clutter out of one's life. I stopped reading at the point where the author ordered his readers to get rid of all their cookbooks, on the grounds that no one uses cookbooks anyway. If he's that wrong about my kitchen, said I, why should I trust him about any of my other possessions?

My colleague Digby Anderson has a far more sensible reason for urging readers to get rid of (most of) their cookbooks: not that they don't use them, but rather that they do, searching for new (or, worse, easier) dishes instead of perfecting the ones they know. His is a good, conservative approach, rather like that of the Boston matron who was asked where she got her hats. "*Get* my hats? I *have* my hats."

But like most things, even conservative things, this can perhaps be carried too far. After all, even Mrs. Oldname presumably *got* her hats once upon a time. And since we can't undo the modern world, we might at least take advantage of one of its delightful aspects, the chance to explore cuisines far from the one we grew up with, through the profusion of good new cookbooks.

Not that we have to throw away our old ones, Mr. Clutter notwithstanding. Early Fannie Farmer (I use the 1912 edition) is hard to beat on American baked goods. And the first and second waves of writers who worked to introduce Americans to French and Mediterranean cooking—the Chamberlains with their Clémentine, Julia Child, Craig

Miss Bridges is NR*'s managing editor.*

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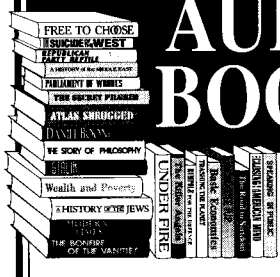

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Claiborne, Michael Field—hold up very well indeed. But this groundwork having been laid, the trend has been to particularized cookbooks—particularized by region, or by their provenance in one chef's kitchen. This category has yielded some of my favorites.

When Giuliano Bugialli published *Foods of Tuscany*, some readers wondered how it would differ from his previous books, since his life's work has seemed to be to persuade the world that anything good in Italian cooking ultimately derives from Tuscany. This can become almost comical, but his recipes are first-rate, and, unlike some people who give cooking classes, he is able to explain techniques clearly on the printed page.

As is Marcella Hazan, from Tuscany's rival province, Emilia-Romagna. Mrs. Hazan is a bit more eclectic—her *Classic Italian Cook Book* probably has three times as many recipes from outside Emilia as in it—and she's deliciously hard-line where it counts:

> I cannot imagine Italy without its vegetable stalls, filling ancient squares and animating dusty side streets with mounds of fabulous forms in purple, green, red, gold, and orange. In a land heavy with man's monuments, these are the soil's own masterworks.
>
> Perhaps one day the vitality of these still-flourishing markets will be replaced by the pallor of deep-freeze counters, those cemeteries of food, where produce is sealed up in waxed boxes marked, like some tombstones, with photographs of the departed. But I hope it never happens. I would sooner be deprived of all the marvels of Michelangelo.

Not to be left out is Ada Boni, who in a sense was the Italian Julia Child. However, Italy being as it is, the foreign foods Mrs. Boni acquainted Italians with were—the foods of other regions of Italy. Her *Italian Regional Cooking* is a joy; the section on the Abruzzi is particularly rich in wonderful dishes that have not been made familiar by Italian restaurants in this country—a tuna casserole made with fresh tuna, potatoes, and onions, to mention one, or *timballo di Scamorzo* (potatoes sliced and parboiled, then dipped in egg and fried, then layered with cheese and baked; superb, and unlike anything else I've ever tasted).

One of my favorite French cookbooks is actually Belgian—*La Cuisine Chantraine*, by a Brussels restaurateur, Charles Chantraine. (This book is out of print, but easily available through used-book finders.) Chantraine explains why restaurant cooking can be a good model for the home cook: "You will see in our recipes that the time-consuming work is very often done in advance. . . . It has nothing to do with 'short-cuts' that sacrifice quality. On the contrary, its purpose is to produce a perfect dish, which in a restaurant cannot be done at all unless it is done efficiently." With Chantraine's guidance, anyone who is not put off by instructions like "With the lean pieces of meat removed, the bouillon should continue to simmer for 10 hours" can prepare a year's worth of *glace de viande* (concentrated meat essence) in a single weekend.

Speaking of restaurateurs, there is Paul Bocuse. I don't know whether, as some say, it is only out of sentiment that Michelin hasn't stripped his restaurant of one of its stars. But whatever may happen to the restaurant, its food—along with the best of *notre Paul*'s personality—is enshrined in his books, especially his *Cuisine du Marché*. This is distinguished not only by the inclusion of his most famous dishes, like the *soupe aux truffes Elysée*, but also by the loving descriptions of standard preparations that other writers toss off in a few lines. A classic is the page-long mixture of instruction and rapture that begins, "Mayonnaise fears the cold."

One could go on and on. For example, to the Russian empire. The marvelous cooking of the imperial court, leaning heavily on *trompe l'oeil* (such as the true chicken Kiev, chicken breast made to look like a drumstick, complete with protruding bone), is best represented by Nika Hazelton's *Russian Tea Room Cookbook*; the rustic cooking of the outlying regions, by Anya von Bremzen's *Please to the Table*.

In fact the only danger—to paraphrase Pierre Franey, whose *60-Minute Gourmet* volumes are a newspaper editor's conceit that actually works—is that you'll wind up with so many favorite dishes that some of them will get a look-in only once or twice a year. But to anyone not obsessed with clutter, that is surely a much nicer problem than the despairing cry, "I can't think of a single thing to cook tonight." □

FILM

Forgo *Fargo*

JOHN SIMON

THE Coen brothers' ***Fargo*** is their best film so far, which isn't saying very much. Everything the brothers have sprung on us has been far-out, arbitrary, and vastly overdone. Some of it was merely attitudinizing and bad; some of it, like *Barton Fink* and *The Hudsucker Proxy*, asinine and insufferable. *Fargo* could have been a nice little *film noir* if they hadn't compounded it with black comedy, absurdism, and folksy farce: Scandinavian-American Midwesterners up, or down, to their hickish shenanigans.

Some of this, surprisingly, works; some of it ranges from the unpalatable to the indigestible. It may be that all these paltry denizens of hyperborean Minnesota (and, in a few, brief scenes, North Dakota—or what passes for it) really exist like this: living and talking in slow motion, saying, "Let me fix you some eggs," five times over, and profusely punctuating their speech with *yah* and *jeez*. Marge Gunderson, the pregnant small-town police chief who is the film's hero as well as heroine, manages at one point three *jeezes* in a row, which is cheesy enough to make you check your cholesterol. Inasmuch as she is a smart one underneath, one wonders where the line between homage and patronization may lie, if indeed it exists.

The film begins with a title card informing us that *Fargo* is based on a true story, with only the names changed "out of respect for the dead." If this is indeed true—I don't mean the story, I mean the respect—it is the first time the brothers have exhibited this particular trait; and, like all tyros, they are not very good at it. The film oozes contempt, or at least condescension, for its characters, the broth-

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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ers, though originally Minnesotans, having made their triumphal getaway. The dramatis personae mostly bumble and bungle while still alive, whatever respect they may achieve when dead. In the case of one of them, death means being run through a wood chipper, with one white-socked leg obstinately protruding.

I am, however, willing to grant the likelihood of this being based on a true story: it is far too good for the brothers (Ethan writes, Joel directs, both produce) to have invented it. What they have done, though, is to encrust the story with their predilection for the bizarre. Minor example: Marge, seven months pregnant, eats like a horse. Her husband (expectably called Norm)—amateur painter, fisherman, and bumpkin—inspects a bagful of nightcrawlers right at the table where Marge is eating, which nowise cuts her appetite. Major example: Marge leaves her town of Brainerd for Minneapolis on the criminals' trail. A high-school classmate, having caught her being interviewed on television, invites her to lunch at the Radisson. A Japanese-American, he talks about having been married to another classmate who just died. Playing on Marge's sympathy, he tries to make out. Later, Marge discovers that the man never married, and that his "wife" is alive.

This episode takes up considerable time, but to what purpose? It shows us the Radisson dining room, and allows a Japanese-American to contribute a few *yah*s, and Marge a passel of *jeez*es. (I feel like taking a hint from Lewis Carroll, and beating her when she jeezes.) The brothers do show guts in making a Japanese-American and, in another case, an Indian unsympathetic; but it would be even more daring for them to tell a story straightforwardly and economically, without their baroque curlicues.

What story? That of a milquetoasty Minneapolis car salesman, Jerry Lundegaard, who, having fallen into debt, gets the aforementioned Indian to put him in touch with two crooks: Showalter, a small, nervous, talkative weirdo (the ubiquitous Steve Buscemi), and the big, blond, menacingly taciturn Grimsrud (the unexpected Peter Stormare, ex-Bergman leading man). They agree to kidnap Jerry's wife for a sizable ransom, to be paid by her wealthy but stingy father, Wade Gustafson.

Things go wrong from the very start. The kidnapping, an effective mixture of the comic and the horrible, almost mis-

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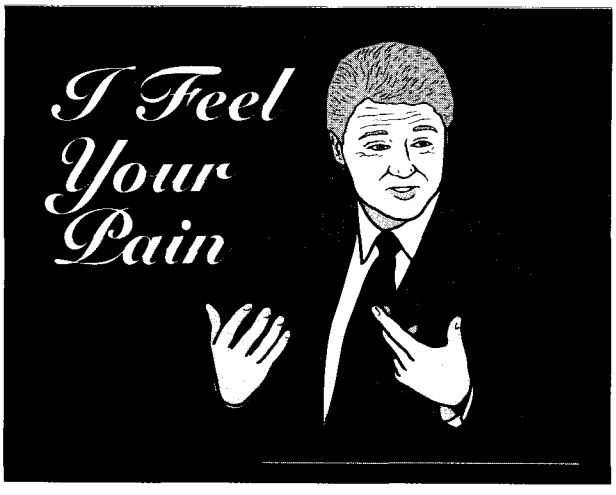

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carries when, on the road back, the men are stopped by a state trooper whom they have to kill, ditto a couple of motorists who witness the crime. Holed up in their house in Fargo, missing the whores they like to shack up with, they quarrel with each other or with Jerry over the phone. Marge Gunderson enters the case amid some folksy banter with her husband (he hopes to get one of his duck paintings on a U.S. stamp), and further cozy badinage with her assisting subordinate.

In her slow way, Marge is shrewd on the job, even if her deductions are couched in verbiage such as "Oh, ya betcha, yah," and, ironically about her investigation, "I'm doing really super here." And I'm not sure how many "Thanks a bunch"es I can take. But sometimes it all pays off, as when a prostitute who had sex with Showalter describes him only as small, funny-looking, and, in an afterthought, as uncircumcised. Marge asks demurely, "Was he funny-looking apart from that?"

The brothers have good taste in cinematographers, and have acquired one of the best in Roger Deakins. He shoots rural Minnesota as a huge blanket of snow, the image turning fuzzy at the edges to suggest recession into infinity, and even greater desolation. The violence, when it erupts, is sudden and grotesque, and all the more convincing. Marge and Norm's down-home lovey-doveyness seems a bit overdone, as is her byplay with her sidekicks. But her doggedly earnest interrogations have a slow, cumulative impact, and are shot in a way allowing the ambience to contribute richly to the aroma of a scene.

As Marge, Frances McDormand verges on the cutesy but manages, in the nick of time, to pull herself back from the verge. As Jerry, William H. Macy, his face as wrinkly as a Shar-Pei puppy's, makes masterly transitions from discomfiture to distress, his voice similarly progressing from an overeager quaver to a despairing whine. As his hapless spouse, Kristin Rudrüd etches a perfect cameo: simperingly unbearable in domesticity, she becomes heartbreakingly poignant in danger. As her blustering and conniving father, Harve Presnell is boomingly effective; as Norm, John Carroll Lynch is an inextricable weave of amiability and clunkiness.

As the kidnappers, Buscemi and Stormare are complementary creeps, but then Stormare, who otherwise utters only a few, short and basic, words, will suddenly deliver himself of "unguent," in a characteristic Coen touch. And when Marge lectures the one surviving, handcuffed criminal with "There's more to life than a little money, you know," and adds, "Don't you *know* that?" folksiness and absurdity enjoy their preposterously entwined apogee.

■ There may be people benighted enough to find the British ***Jack and Sarah*** delightful. Jack, a young lawyer, is blissfully married to Sarah, who is about to have a baby. Their new house is going up, and the nervous Jack hectors the workers; he commits almost every gaffe an expectant father is heir to, notably fainting from birth pangs during a lesson in Lamaze. But then—bingo!—Sarah dies in childbirth (unlikely), and Jack refuses to have anything to do with his healthy baby daughter (unlikelier). Here comedy unexpectedly turns to unearned drama.

Jack's parents and Sarah's widowed mother conspire to make Jack fall in love with his newborn by placing her, mother-naked, next to him on the bed as he's sleeping. There is something faintly *louche* about this huge hairy man tossing in his sleep next to a tiny baby with her genitalia prominently exposed. Meanwhile the assembled elders in another room listen in on a clandestine intercom—a kind of audio-voyeurism not without its own fishiness.

The initially shocked and appalled Jack, after pawing the infant a bit, becomes promptly infatuated with her, even though his attempts to improvise diapers are predictably amateurish. Apparently all those elaborate and ludicrously exaggerated preparations for fatherhood taught Jack nothing. But, as much as the family tries to lavish help on him, he is determined to be both father and mother to the little one, whom in a moment of inspiration he names Sarah.

But he does get some peculiar and equivocal help from a strange drunken tramp, William (Ian McKellen), whom for no imaginable reason he engages as a combination butler, cook, and nursemaid. Jack takes Sarah, papoose fashion, with him everywhere from office to restaurants, in one of which he witnesses the firing of Amy (Samantha Mathis), a charming young American waitress who is somewhat discombobulated. When he runs into her in a department store's mothers' room, which he preempts over a guard's protests while he struggles with Sarah's nappies, he hires Amy as a live-in nanny. The comic consequences are legion, especially when a romantic triangle with a female office superior (Cherie Lunghi, in a somewhat stilted performance) and Amy ensues, with a highly predictable outcome.

There are, equally predictably, fine performances from Eileen Atkins and Judi Dench, and one or two others, notably the various infants and toddlers who combine to play Sarah. Tim Sullivan has directed ably but written leadenly, and, in the large and rather scary Richard E. Grant, he evidently picked the wrong Grant as leading man. Jean-Yves Escoffier's cinematography is subtle and inventive, but wasted on this ponderous clinker. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Diversity Myth: Multiculturalism and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford, by David O. Sacks and Peter A. Thiel (Independent Institute, Oakland, Calif., 283 pp., $24.95)

FROM the late 1960s on, politicization and mediocrity in the name of social engineering practically destroyed liberal education at Stanford, particularly at its core, the humanities. Most of the professors just went along, as 95 per cent of Frenchmen had done under Vichy. Those who didn't toe the line had rough going. Sacks and Thiel detail all this in their sober and reliable, often grim, sometimes hilarious book. As students at Stanford, the two young authors showed no lack of guts in reporting and commenting on the unfolding scandal, in the student papers. Now, a few years after graduation, they have put together a carefully documented and sensitively recorded, almost day-by-day, historical account of the whole tragic saga, together with keen analysis of how all this could have happened. For example, the pages on *ressentiment* as the mainspring of the ganging-up on genius like Shakespeare's read as convincingly as Ortega. Future historians of the period will find this book indispensable.

—Robert Greer Cohn

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ISAAC

(Continued from page 27)

But Israel's increasing inability to deal with terror may nonetheless bring down the Labor government. Following the Rabin assassination—which had, as one Israeli journalist noted, made faith in the peace process a patriotic act—Labor seemed to have clear sailing. But as Israeli voters go to vote at the end of May, they are liable to ask themselves the question Ronald Reagan posed to such good effect: "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" For Israelis, that means first and foremost, Do you feel more secure? Do you feel safer boarding a bus? Going to a shopping mall? The answer clearly is No.

Peace remains as popular a target as ever in Israel. But if the loss of personal security is the price for a piece of paper marked "Peace," the promise will look empty and Israelis will look elsewhere. □

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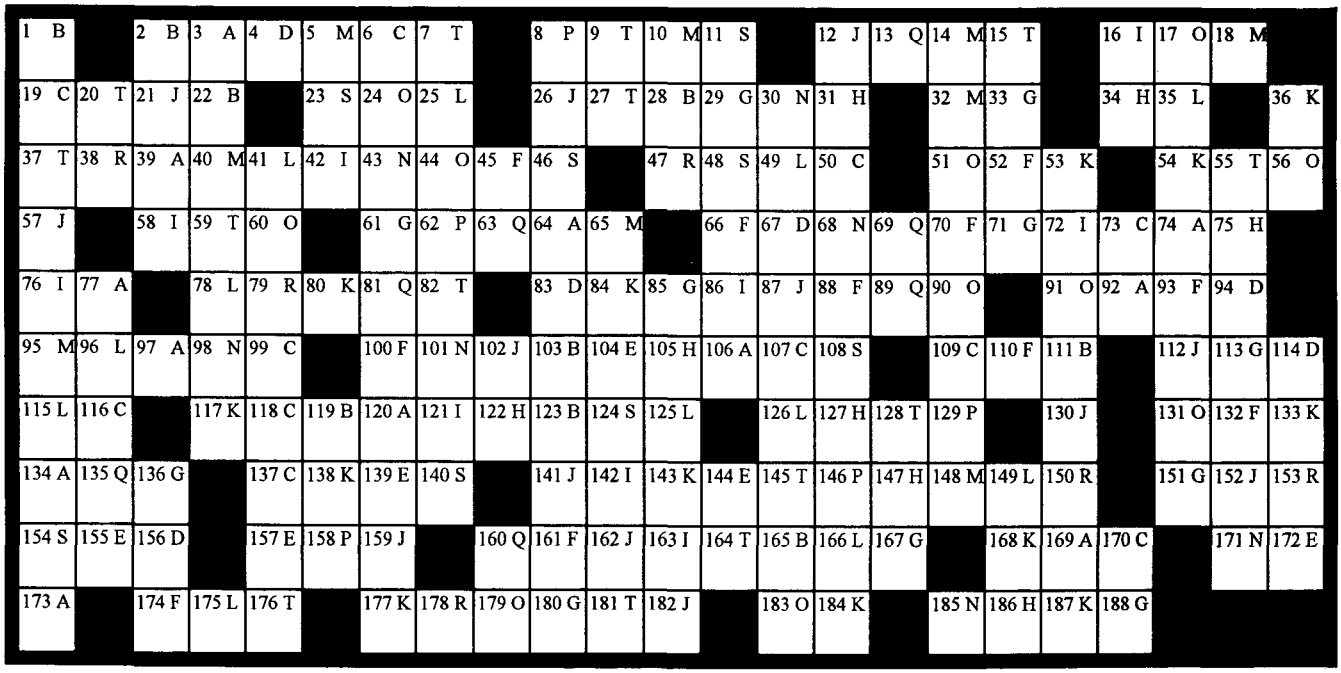
TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner



DEFINITIONS

A. Process by which treaties become law — 97 64 120 106 39 134 74 3 173 92 77 169

B. How a softball pitcher throws — 28 123 111 165 119 103 1 2 22

C. Favorite kindergarten activity (3 words) — 50 19 6 137 109 73 170 107 118 116 99

D. Egypt's cowheaded love-goddess — 94 83 4 156 67 114

E. Adorest — 139 104 144 172 155 157

F. "Double, double, toil and trouble," for instance — 88 161 66 132 45 93 100 174 70 52 110

G. Dappled little horse (2 words) — 61 33 29 167 180 188 71 151 113 136 85

H. This son of Uranus was "all hands" — 34 105 122 147 186 75 127 31

I. Position at which troops hear their commanders — 121 76 86 72 16 58 42 163 142

J. Premature passing (2 words) — 152 162 26 141 112 57 21 182 12 159 130 102 87

K. Stay the course (3 words) — 177 184 53 54 143 80 138 36 133 168 84 117 187

L. Celestial delights (2 words) — 175 35 115 41 49 166 149 125 78 96 25 126

M. Train schedule — 32 5 95 14 18 10 148 65 40

N. Small quantity (more than a smidgen, less than an armload) — 30 98 68 43 185 101 171

O. Lady's formal attire (2 words) — 44 56 60 24 179 131 90 183 17 91 51

P. Egyptian god of wisdom, science, etc. — 146 129 62 8 158

Q. Tarpaper, shingles, etc. — 63 13 135 69 160 89 81

R. More than is needful or proper — 79 153 47 178 38 150

S. Aggregate — 11 48 46 23 140 154 124 108

T. Def. H., plus brothers Cottus and Gyes — 9 176 128 55 181 20 7 164 59 82 145 27 37 15

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definition on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. ST. PAUL: *I Corinthians*: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Read All about It! But Hurry

NEW YORK, MARCH 26

After months and months of negotiation, one American enterprise made a deal with the half-dozen most critical custodians of Soviet data. It would bring out 25 volumes, perhaps as many as 50, laying bare, so to speak, the minutes of the Communist era, 1917–1991. It wasn't the State Department that managed this, or the CIA, or the Library of Congress, let alone the National Endowment for the Humanities. It was Yale University Press. Jonathan Brent, its executive editor, made a deal that gave U.S. scholars the right to research and to publish the critical archives of the regime. Of the KGB, the military, the Presidium, the Central Committee, the foreign ministry. The terms? The Yale University Press is obliged to publish its volumes simultaneously in Russian, for distribution from Moscow.

Now this enterprise is a huge contribution to an understanding of the most important political phenomenon of the century, the rise and fall of the Communist international movement. The documents tell us not only about the workaday machinations of the largest totalitarian organization in history, but also about its actors. We have already from the Annals of Communism series a volume giving us the letters written by Stalin to Molotov, his most trusted subordinate—arguably, his only trusted subordinate. They tell us things many of us more or less knew—that Stalin was suspicious, ruthless, ironhanded—but they do so with the finality of the holographic original. Labor problem out there? Stalin writes to his lieutenant, "Definitely shoot two or three dozen wreckers from these apparaty [*sic*], including several dozen common cashiers." Volumes are scheduled, all of them edited under scrupulous scholarly supervision, that deal with the last days of the Romanovs. There will be volumes on Lenin's secret archive, the church, the people and the Bolsheviks, Soviet politics and repression, the diary of Georgi Dimitrov, the assassination of Sergei Kirov . . . "What Saudi is to oil, these records are to twentieth-century history," Bruce Nelan wrote in *Time* magazine.

Now here is the problem.

The parliamentary turmoil in Russia casts long shadows. The Russian Left has never liked the idea of disgorging all the secrets because they have the effect of eviscerating any trace of idealism in the Soviet experiment, at least in the hands of its generals. And the Russian Right doesn't like it because the firm hand of authoritarian government beckons to a society punchdrunk with liberalism and suffering now corruption, crime, inflation, and unemployment. The elections in June could very well result in a Communist victory. How long between such a development and a freeze of the agreement with Yale? It would not happen overnight, and there would be great pressure from the archival community within Russia to continue with the operation. The publications are of academic and historical interest to the United States. Their importance to Russia has to do with the country's future. And the volatility of the political situation justifies proceeding without delay.

And the U.S. problem? Funds. The usual good soldiers have made contributions—Olin, Smith Richardson, Bradley—but, to date, less than $400,000 (out of $3 million needed) has been raised. The project is unique. If it were less than that we could say of it that it is "the kind of thing" the National Endowment for the Humanities was created to encourage. Why not? Why not the Ford Foundation? The Rockefeller Foundation? The MacArthur Fund?

The judgment of this observer is that we have here something on the order of a biblical narrative discrediting everything about the Soviet Union popularized by leftist fancy for two generations. The hero John Reed turns out to have been paid $1 million for his work as a Soviet agent. The labor-union movement was primarily an instrument of Soviet power. The independent "progressive" movements in the United States, France, Italy were Moscow operations. We have here a historical juggernaut capable of refashioning the trendy history in which so many American scholars were once ensnared; and they are not in the mood, many of them, to invite the coroner to certify to their naïveté.

"Take it from me, kid—executive privilege is nothing compared to legislative *privilege."*

Imagine, just imagine the amount of money that would have flowed in if an early document had established that Alger Hiss was, through 1935–1945, a U.S. patriot, untempted by any ideological wind east of the New Deal. If such a document existed, the MacArthur types would have handed the Yale enterprise the keys to their treasuries. The National Endowment? You account for it. But if you have influence, use it to raise money for the Annals of Communism series of the Yale University Press, Executive Editor, Jonathan Brent, 302 Temple Street, New Haven, Connecticut 06520. □

Life for the Nineties

NEW YORK, MARCH 19

I long ago noted an article by James Michener in the *New York Times* making the point that longevity would become the primary social problem of the twentieth century, let alone the twenty-first. We became friends, and walking together the ten-block distance from the press hotel in Peking to the Great Hall of the People on a cold day in February 1972, to witness President Nixon's celebratory opening of the gates of China, I asked how old he was. Sixty-five, he said. Twenty-four years later—last week—I have a card from him. It is a printed message. It says merely that he would not wish his friends to think he had forgotten about them.

It is so, with the very old, the problem of staying in touch. I was encouraged by his family to telephone Malcolm Muggeridge on his 85th birthday. He acknowledged in a light, hoarse voice his pleasure at my calling, and then said: "You know, I will not write to you. I am too old."

What are we to make of the diehards? In the last short season I have been closely in touch with four men and women who are more than ninety years old.

One of them was for twenty years the editor of the weekly with the largest circulation in the world. I dined with him in Paris a fortnight ago and he reiterated his single sorrow, that his (beloved) wife had died before him. The most touching of all Greek legends tells of Philemon and Baucis, who though old and destitute admitted and nourished a god posing as a beggar at their door. In due course Zeus revealed himself, radiating sparks of Olympian divinity, and announced that in

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return for their disinterested charity they could request of him any favor they chose. There was only one wish, said Philemon: that when the time came, they should die simultaneously. With a gentle stroke of his caduceus, the god transformed the aged couple into two trees, whose branches fondled one another in winter, their leaves nestling in the spring.

That is not a problem—simultaneous deaths—we can easily handle. A few years ago Arthur Koestler and his wife, Cynthia, twenty years his junior, were found sitting upright in their living room in London; dead from self-inflicted poison. They had decided, a document posthumously revealed, that neither wished to survive the other: so that when Koestler got his negative reading from the doctor, with its conclusive prognosis, they enacted their vow. I pause to recall the evening of their wedding day, spent with me and their best man, James Burnham, aboard my little sailboat in the Hudson River.

Such thoughts bring to mind, of course, the Kevorkian alternative. The Koestlers took it; James Michener has not; nor has my friend in Paris, or my retired lawyer in Connecticut, or my retired secretary in San Francisco, or my retired music teacher in Katonah, New York. It is a swelling statistic, the surviving ninety-year-old. My mother died on the eve of her ninetieth birthday and senility had set in. She was quite content in her spacious quarters at the old people's home. (She was under the impression that she owned it.) No such mental lapse has afflicted my four ninety-year-old friends, who, although they can be quoted as having lamented the biological corollaries of old age, cannot complain about any deterioration in their minds.

Well, yes. My lawyer had to reach, on a recent visit, to recall a relevant Supreme Court decision from 1914. My music teacher can't manipulate her fingers as once she did to create her magical improvisations. My secretary tells me she uses the typewriter only to write to me; she hasn't the physical strength to use it regularly, let alone to take her long habitual walks. My friend in Paris is jubilant about his material arrangements: He has what they term a reverse mortgage. You deed your house/apartment to a bank. That bank pays your tax, maintains your property, pays the maid and the cleaning woman. When you die, the house is theirs. The bank wins if you pull out early; loses, if you go on and on. My friend told me about a Parisian woman who had made such an arrangement at age 76 and died at age 121, having impoverished her dead banker.

There are those who believe that suicide—euthanasia—is not the right answer, tempting though it can be. How much of life did Cynthia Koestler deprive herself of, in her act of love? But James Michener's premonition was correct. Old age is the looming problem of the civilization that has discovered the keys to longevity. □

Airplane Crosstalk

NEW YORK, MARCH 22

Those Americans condemned to spend hundreds of hours every year on airplanes are remarkable, some would say for their stoicism; others would say for their docility. The Marriott hotels make it a point to ask their overnight customers if they found anything wayward in the service given: if so, please to specify what it was. One has to suppose that after going to such pains to research customer complaints, some people, somewhere, meet to reflect on them. If there is ever—anywhere—a meeting by airline executives to reflect on what they impose on traveling Americans, one wonders where, and how they have collected their data. Have you ever been handed a slip of paper soliciting your reactions to airline procedures?

I tend to travel first class, thanks to the hospitality of my clients, combined with hedonistic inclinations cultivated with great sweat over a period of many years. The primary difference between first-class and tourist-class travel is the increasing differential in price. If the price increase were happening pari passu with increased amenities, that would make economic sense. But exactly the opposite is happening. The quality of the food diminishes, legroom straitens, and scheduling is progressively more bizarre. One might simply ignore the whole business on the grounds that compared to other world problems—starvation, plagues, landslides—it's so-what time. But what edges into the consciousness isn't so much the discomforts as the sense of creeping social docility. In 1961 I wrote an article for *Esquire* called "Why Don't We Complain?" It is the only thing I ever wrote that has been anthologized a dozen times. It evidently occurs to many editors that American lassitude is a phenomenon worth reflecting upon.

I am sitting first-class on USAir, a flight from San Antonio to Pittsburgh. I'm not going to Pittsburgh, I'm going to Cleveland, but there aren't any direct flights to Cleveland, not one. Two days ago I traveled New York to San Antonio. The travel time was just a few minutes longer than the flight last week, New York to Geneva. The schedule proclaimed a stop in Dallas, and then on to San Antonio. But forsooth! after we landed in Dallas it transpired that there were only three of us going on to San Antonio. Suddenly the airplane developed mechanical problems and we were offloaded to a flight to San Antonio leaving one hour and one-half later.

On this flight to Pittsburgh the departure time was 9:15 A.M. At 10:00 A.M. the passengers were served breakfast. Now there are, here and there, strict religious sects with odd dietary laws governing when you can and when you cannot eat. But they don't affect most Americans, and I would bet my favorite pooch that not two—not one—of the passengers on that plane had forgone breakfast before they boarded. Perhaps they ate (as I did) at 7 A.M., a little juice, coffee, and a breakfast roll. Customarily, human beings would again feel the impulse to eat something not sooner than noon. But USAir serves its full breakfast not at noon but at ten. And most people simply eat it. They don't say: Why are you stuffing a second breakfast down my throat when you can readily deduce that I have already eaten breakfast? They don't say: This is a two-and-one-half-hour flight; why not wait at least until the final hour, not the first half-hour, to offer me more food?

I do request a cup of coffee. It arrives in a paper cup. I had forgotten that USAir is famous for this draconian economy. You pay first-class fare and you get coffee in a receptacle McDonald hamburger stands would go out of business after a month if caught using. Why doesn't USAir, which is charging $400 for this flight leg, give its clients the option of paying $402, in return for which they get served coffee in a real, genuine cup? The only alternative is to make a note to carry a mug in your briefcase whenever you can't avoid flying on USAir.

My seat is 1-D and my legs are just about perpendicular, for the simple reason that any attempt to stretch them out a few inches is barred by the bulkhead. If you are less than five feet tall you might be comfortable seated in 1-D. Where do you put your reading matter? On your lap. Because the bulkhead's magazine pouch has space only for the airline magazine and, at that, is situated where your leg might rest if you sought to nuzzle it forward an extra inch or two, seeking space. Why don't they put receptacles for your traveling paraphernalia four feet higher, where they would get in nobody's way, occupying space otherwise unused? Perhaps because no one has ever suggested it.

Why is there no non-stop service, San Antonio–New York—if there is traffic enough for San Antonio–Pittsburgh? A very good question, and conceivably one that no one has ever asked. American air travelers are a supine class. □

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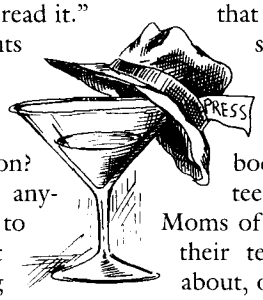
THE GIMLET EYE

JOE BOB BRIGGS

THERE are two kinds of laws: Mom Laws, and Dad Laws. Mom always wants to regulate, control, and pass laws about every single second of human existence. Mom Laws are things like, "Never go out without a muffler, even if you're in a hurry." Or "Never make anybody feel bad, even if you don't like him." Or "Don't take the library book off the shelf unless you really want to read it."

Dad, on the other hand, wants to control *nothing*. Anything is legal to Dad, as long as it doesn't cause immediate death. "Got a new rifle, son? Well, just don't point it at anybody's brain." And if you try to force Dad to pass a law about something, he'll do everything he can to avoid it.



"Dad, the kids are playing football in the street again. What should we do?"

"By golly, I did that when I was a kid."

In other words, Dad never sees the need for a law, and Mom always sees the need for a law. So Mom and Dad do this tug-of-war that keeps us from having *no* laws (Dad's way) and also keeps us from having so many laws that we can't breathe (Mom's way).

In America, today, Mom is winning.

I first noticed this when I was riding in a subway train in New Jersey, and saw a sign that said, "Smoking on this car is SELFISH and ILLEGAL." Wouldn't the word "illegal" be enough? Why did they use the word "selfish." *Because it's a Mom word!* It explains the *reason* for the law. Not smoking on the train is not just the right thing to do. It's part of your education as a properly trained human being.

Then this city in Minnesota passed an Anti-Staring Ordinance. If someone is walking down the street and you *stare* at em too long, you can be arrested. This is definitely a Mom Law. It proceeds from the ancient Mom Dictum, "It's not polite to stare." Take this law to Dad, and he would say, "Did you stare somebody down, son? By golly!"

The best evidence that Hillary runs the White House came last year when President Clinton held a news conference to announce something that made all the network newscasts and the front page of the *New York Times*—namely, that he wanted to get rid of teen smoking.

Teen smoking?

Did I hear this right?

I mean, it's not like anybody has ever been in *favor* of teen smoking. I think the Moms of the world have been telling their teenagers not to smoke for about, oh, a hundred years now.

What's *really* scary about this is that Clinton . . . is a Dad. Doesn't he know that his job is to tell Chelsea, "Well, if you're gonna smoke, just don't smoke *too much*"?

But the ultimate example of Mom Triumphant came a couple years back when a guy in New Jersey got hauled into court for whacking a rat with a broom handle. The charge: "needlessly killing a rodent." The Goody Two Shoes Lobby: the Newark Humane Society.

Welcome to the era of Rat Rights.

I would think that, if any city would be happy to get rid of rats, it would be Newark. But it wasn't killin the rat that bothered the Enviro-Nazis. It was not letting *them* decide how the rat dies. You're supposed to wait till they get there so they can decide whether to "put the rat to sleep" with lethal injection, or "set it free in a nature environment."

Here's what happened. A 69-year-old man caught a rat eating his tomato plants, caught it in a live trap, called the Humane Society to come pick it up. But when they didn't come right away, the rat escaped. He clobbered it with the broom. And he ended up charged with a crime.

IT turns out he was in the middle of a peculiarly American controversy. Condo associations all over America were arguing like crazy over whether to use "glue-board traps" to get rid of rats and mice. All the rat-lovers hate em because it takes too long for the rat to die.

The alternative, they say, is to use cats. I'm sure the Rat Chamber of Commerce loves this idea. Don't put us in a cruel prison, they're thinking, where we slowly waste away. Let us be eaten alive, crushed by the ruthless jaws of a monster ten times our size.

Now my personal rat weapon of choice is a baseball bat, because there's nothing like that "splat" sound when you score a direct hit, especially to the rat cranium. But if I ever get caught by the Rat-Rights Police, I know exactly what I'm gonna say.

"I had to do it. The rat was about to eat a cockroach. I saved the cockroach's life."

After all, if we're gonna be *humane* about this, let's be humane about it, okay? Let's kill every species that tries to kill any *other* species. Let's see, how many species would that be?

I believe the answer is: "All of em."

Listen to me, people. They're *rats*. They *deserve* to die.

Anyhow, the man charged with rat murder was eventually hauled into court, where a judge found him not guilty on very narrow grounds—that the rat-rights law conflicted with another law governing animal life in New Jersey, and therefore his responsibility when confronted with a rat on his premises was vaguely defined by the Legislature.

The judge, you can plainly see, was a mama's boy. □

"Tell Mrs. Addams to make an appointment and to stop faxing us her symptoms."

Mr. Briggs is a syndicated columnist from Grapevine, Texas.

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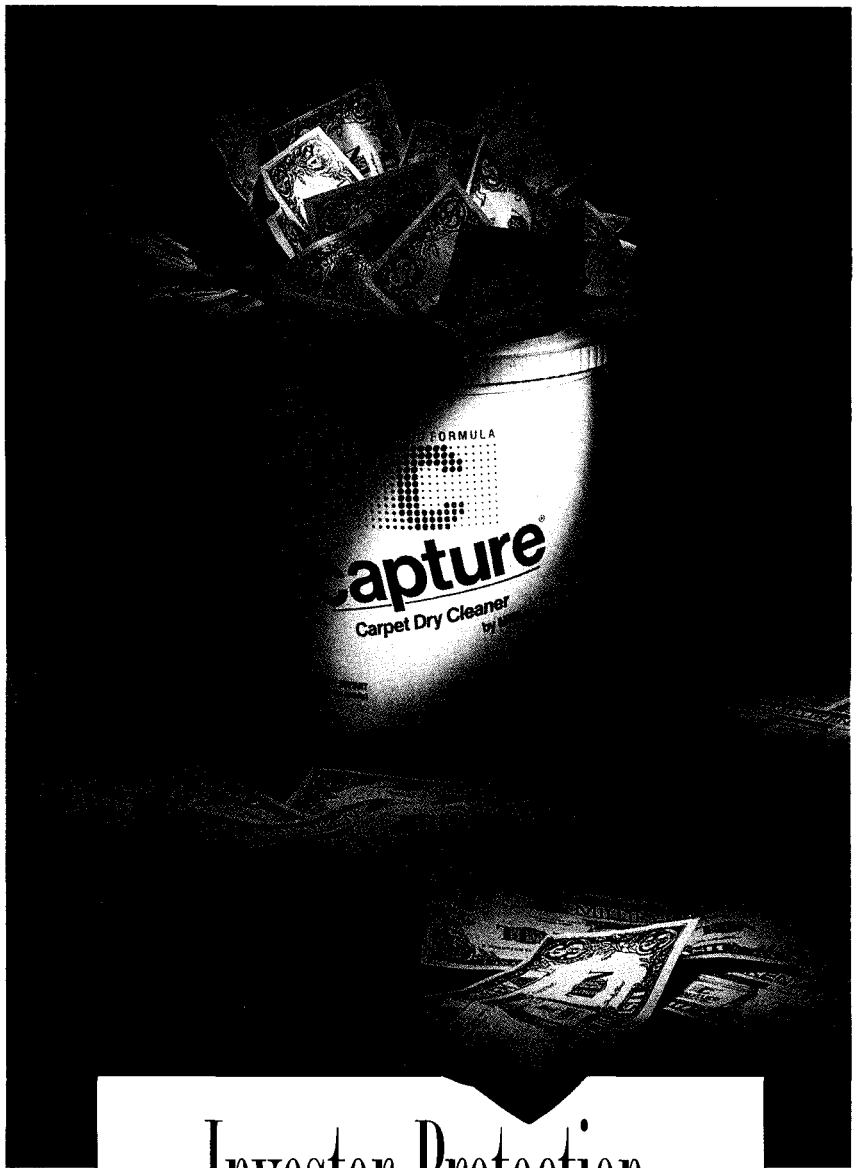

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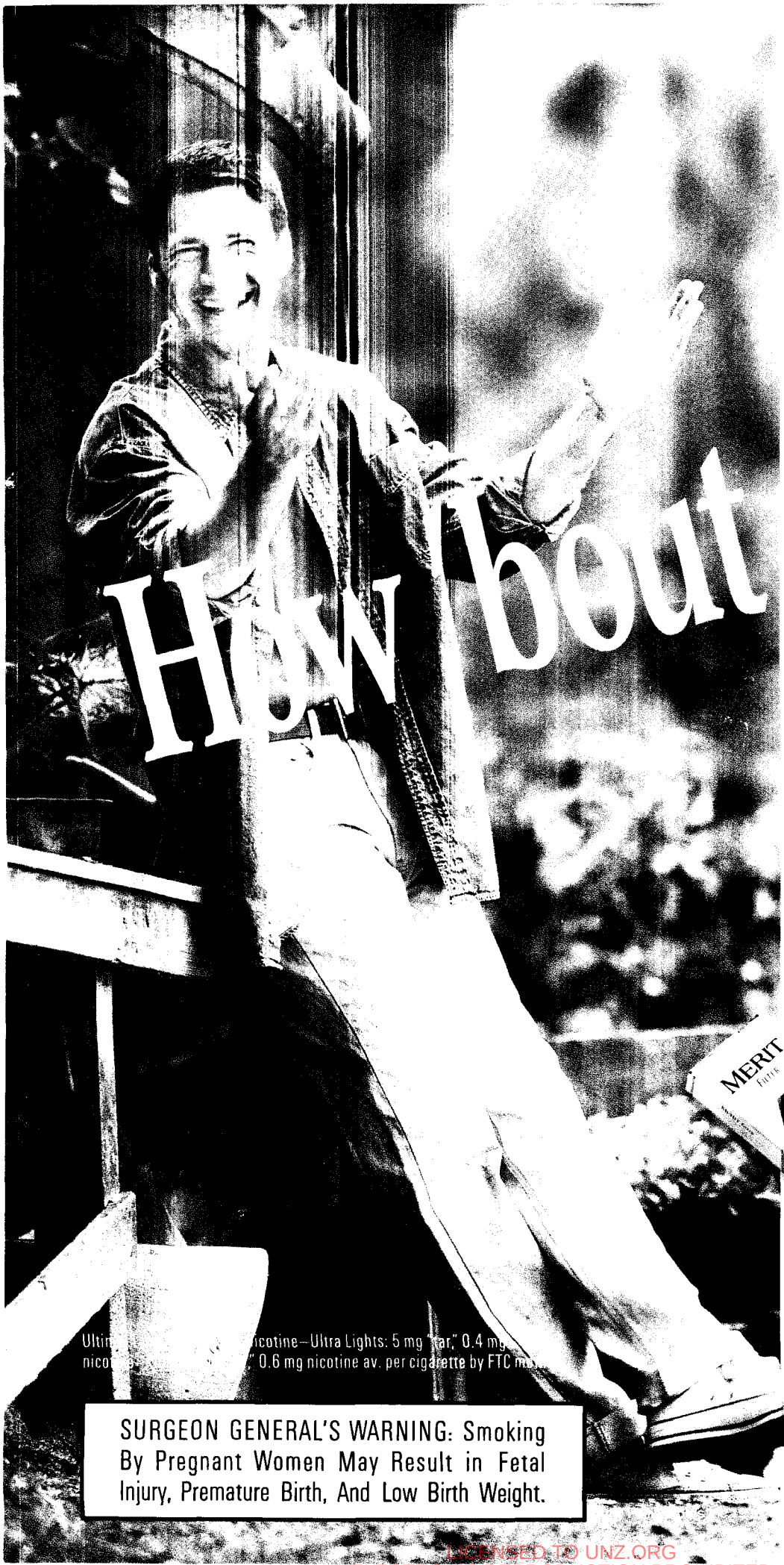

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